the weekly
Standard

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GITMO'S "PIMP DADDY"
THOMAS JOSCELYN

Saddam's Philippines Terror Connection

and other revelations from the Iraqi regime files

STEPHEN F. HAYES

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BPA INTERNATIONAL

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Oprah ♥ Harvey

THE SCRAPBOOK salutes Harvey Mansfield, who is not only our favorite Harvard professor but also the first WEEKLY STANDARD contributor that we're aware of to make it onto the cover of *Oprah* magazine, thanks (ironically?) to his new book *Manliness*.

Mansfield has recently been on the interview circuit, introducing a new generation to some old wisdom. We've read four of these profiles, and they're all worth perusing, since Mansfield has an enviable ability to respond to all manner of questions with interesting, witty, and thought-provoking answers.

The interviewers in the March 2 *Harvard Salient* and the March 4 *Wall Street Journal* were both friendly and penetrating. One actually could learn something about Mansfield's (complicated) take on manliness from them. *The Salient*, as befits a student paper, homed in on the local angle: Was ousted Harvard president Larry Summers deficient in manliness? "He's a manly fellow," replied Mansfield, "but he made his administration too much of a one-man show. He should have gathered a party of defenders and supporters in the administration itself and in the faculty. But instead, he went on his own, and by his many apologies, left his defenders discouraged and dismayed. But he had a manly project, to renew Harvard, to make it great. Right now, Harvard is wealthy, famous, and prestigious. But it isn't great." *Journal* interviewer Naomi Schaefer Riley elicited from Mansfield a sharper judgment on Summers: "He has apologized so much that he looks *unmanly*."

As was perhaps to be expected, the questions posed in the March 12 *New York Times Magazine* were embarrassingly silly, but deftly parried. ("*So your generally left-leaning colleagues are willing to talk to you?* People listen to me, but they don't pay attention to what I say. I should punch them out, but I don't.")

The surprise was the April issue of *Oprah* magazine. Elizabeth Gilbert's interview was deft, good-humored, and intelligent. And the editors were so impressed with Mansfield's answers that they chose to tease the interview on the cover. ("In Praise of Manly Men—Who are they, where are they, and why do we still want them?") Inside they announce that Mansfield has "written the book—the thoughtful, vexing, and ultimately irresistible book"—on the subject of manliness.

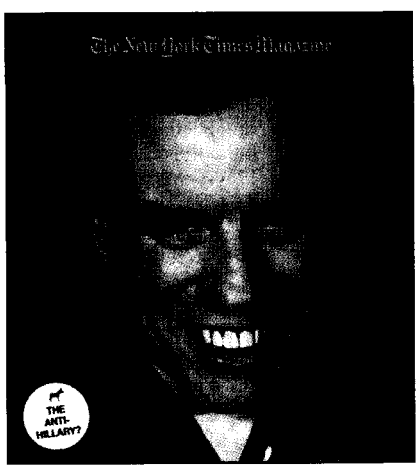
Endorsements don't get much better than that! We trust Yale University Press will be trumpeting that statement in ads in major newspapers and magazines. Meanwhile, we don't want to take sales away from *Oprah*, so we won't print excerpts (plus, we don't want to anticipate our own review).

THE SCRAPBOOK never thought it would be saying this—but real men should buy this month's *Oprah*. And, of course, buy the book. ♦

Raising the Passive Voice to an Art Form

So apparently it's not just conservatives that the *New York Times* goes after with unfair photographs. They also go after liberals—if they happen to be on the wrong side of Hillary Clinton. Witness (at right) last week's grotesque cover portrait of Democrat Mark Warner, which occasioned, three days later, this amusing bit of backpedaling:

"The cover photograph in The Times Magazine on Sunday rendered colors incorrectly for the jacket, shirt and tie worn by Mark Warner, the former Virginia governor who is a possible candidate for the presidency. The jacket was charcoal, not maroon; the shirt was light blue, not pink; the tie was dark blue with stripes, not maroon. . . . The film that was used can cause colors to shift, and the processing altered them further; the change escaped notice because of a misunderstanding by the editors." (*New York Times* "Editors' Note," March 15, 2006.)



Notice, especially, the artful use of the passive voice. According to the *Times*, the guilty parties were, in order, the photograph, the jacket, the shirt, the tie, and the film.

As *Slate*'s Mickey Kaus observed, "Isn't that like a newspaper saying that the facts changed in transcription and 'the writing altered them further.' Well, OK then!" ♦

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Senatorial Metaphors

Don't look now, but we think Charles Schumer just compared Arab businessmen to skinheads.

According to a piece in the *New York Observer* last week, Schumer's beating the drums to kill the Dubai ports deal "came under fire from many quarters, with some critics suggesting that opposition to the deal was driven by xenophobia or anti-Arab racism. Mr. Schumer heatedly disputes that view. 'Let's say skinheads had bought a company to take over our port,' he said. 'I think the outcry would have been the same.'"

So why exactly do businessmen who happen to be Arabs deserve to be compared with skinheads, Mr. Schumer? ♦

The End of Dutch Multiculturalism

Paul Belien, editor of the *Brussels Journal* (*www.brusselsjournal.com*), draws our attention to the new entrance exam for immigrants to the Netherlands.

"Since March 1," he reports, "people who want to settle in the Netherlands are required to pass a preliminary exam at the Dutch embassy in their native country. This so-called 'integration test' includes a film which exposes the would-be immigrants to scenes of kissing homosexual men and topless women. The message is that 'If you can't tolerate gay lifestyle and public nudity, you can't come.'

"Citizens from EU member states and from Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Japan are exempt from the test. Fortunately this applies to the United States, too. Otherwise Americans—most of whom do not approve of the public display of depravity and nudity—would not be allowed to settle in the Netherlands. . . .

"Participants are obliged to buy the film (even if they find it offensive), as well as a CD ROM and a picture book. However, a censored version of the film, without the gay kissing scene and the female nudity, has been made for countries such as Iran, where the distribution of homosexual and nude material is illegal."

There are several possible morals to be drawn, but we'll mention a couple of special interest to foes of multiculturalism. One, if you do away with multiculturalism and insist on assimilation to the majority culture, defining what that culture is will be contentious. Two, be careful what you wish for. ♦

We Are All Neoconservatives Now

"Mr. Bush was clearly seeking to manage expectations and answer a new group of critics—neoconservatives who have said that because Iraq is now liberated, it is up to the Iraqis themselves to defend the country and piece together a government acceptable to all factions. Among them have been William F. Buckley Jr. . . . "

(David E. Sanger, the *New York Times*, March 14, 2006.) ♦

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Casual

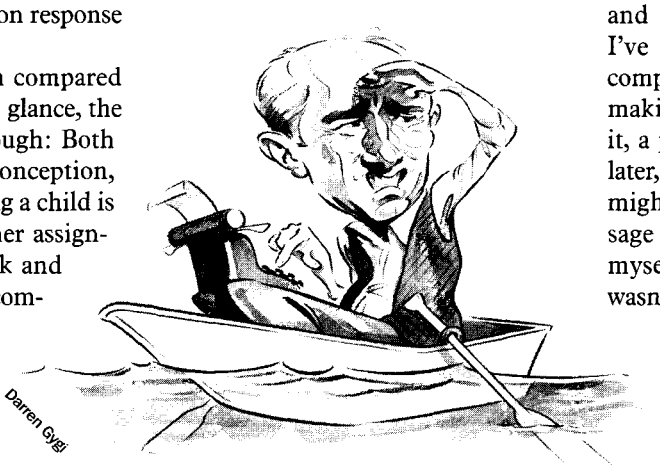
The Perils of Prolificacy

I seem to have written another book, my eighteenth. I'm gratified that the ecologists haven't thus far come after me for destroying so many trees. The most ambiguous compliment a writer can receive is to be told that he or she is prolific. I fear that I may be getting prolific, if I'm not already there. "Oh, him again" is how prolific writers suspect their new books are greeted. "*Basta!*" they fear, is another common response to their latest creation.

Writing a book is often compared to having a child. At quick glance, the analogy seems cogent enough: Both entail, in a rough sense, conception, gestation, and birth. Having a child is obviously much the tougher assignment. What having a book and having a child do have in common is the unresolved question of why anyone who goes through it once would want to go through it again.

One of the two chief ways of writing a book is to read everything available on the subject, talk with all the people who might be helpful, do such legwork as is required—and then, after however long this requires, sit down and begin writing. The other way, my way, is to start writing the book and do the research as you go along. I don't think my way is better; in fact, the first way sounds to me much more sensible. My problem is that I don't have the organizational power to do all the necessary groundwork and then keep everything in good order until I need it.

One difficulty with my way is that, less than half way out to sea, you begin to feel that writing this book is a serious mistake. You tell yourself you really don't know diddly about the subject, you certainly haven't anything interesting (let alone original) to say, and you wish you hadn't already spent the publisher's advance. Only a devotion to craft combined with a grudging unwillingness to return the money to the publisher has, in the case of a number of my books, kept me at my oars, hoping eventually to sight land. Fortunately for me, land has always turned up, even if the destination isn't quite where I had imagined it would be when I first set out.



The chief feeling I have upon completing a book is that it is a pity the book is finished because I'm only now ready to write a fine book on this subject. Some writers are more patient than others; I am among the others. George Santayana worked no fewer than 45 years (not continuously, let me add) on *The Last Puritan*, his only novel, which turned out to be an unlikely bestseller and a Book of the Month Club selection, which not so secretly delighted him.

I enjoy revising my books, eliminating repetitions, correcting errors of fact and grammar, tightening things up, battening things down. I reread and rework each chapter as I write it, sometimes several times. But until the book is completed I never go back and reread all the chapters that I've written to see if what I've done thus far hangs together. I'm too frightened to discover that it doesn't. If every sentence is well made, if each paragraph works, I tell myself, then things can't be in entirely wretched shape. Still, there are mornings when I have to ask, what, exactly, is the story here? Why, apart from the hope of lucre and a bit of temporary fame, am I writing this book? These can sometimes be exceedingly touchy questions.

I feel less than triumphant when I've completed a book. To revert to the cliché childbirth analogy, neither do I feel anything like post-partum depression. I feel instead a calm pleasure in having finished a task I've set myself. Although I've had some commercial and critical success with my books, I've never written a book at whose completion I felt that, like a gymnast making a perfect landing, I've nailed it, a perfect ten. Only a year or more later, when for one reason or another I might open the book and find a passage that pleases me, do I say to myself, "Not bad, not bad at all. I wasn't stupid when I wrote that. How come I'm so stupid today?"

I wish I had a better way of celebrating the completion of a book. Pop open a jeroboam of champagne, buy a vicuna coat, book a flight to Paris. Usually I don't even treat myself to a Snickers bar. The best I seem able to come up with is to fritter away the next few days, putting in order the books and notes accumulated in composing the recently finished book, answering email, allowing myself some desultory reading.

I do have a sense of qualified freedom. This usually means the freedom to start thinking in a more concentrated way about my next book. I've neglected to mention that my recently completed book is about Alexis de Tocqueville. My next book is to be about Fred Astaire. Perhaps I ought to combine the two and call it *Dancing in Democracy*. Give it a dust-jacket with a golden retriever on the cover and it could be a big seller.

Joseph Epstein

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the weekly Standard

Death of a Dictator

Albert Wohlstetter, better than almost any other American strategic thinker, understood Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian dictator who died at The Hague where he was on trial for genocide. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal* in 1995, Wohlstetter drew a direct line between Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and the Balkan butcher: "The successful coalition in the Gulf War . . . left in place a Ba'ath dictatorship. . . . That told Slobodan Milosevic, who is not a slow learner, that the West would be even less likely . . . to stop his own overt use of the Yugoslav Federal Army to create a Greater Serbia purged of non-Serbs."

Wohlstetter was not the only person to recognize the evil of Milosevic. Margaret Thatcher was a prominent advocate of direct and firm action against Serbian aggression. She recalled indignantly in 1999, "The West could have stopped Milosevic in Slovenia or Croatia in 1991, or in Bosnia in 1992." In 1995, Milosevic was slowed, at least, by the Dayton Accord, which, however, left Bosnian Serbs with most of the country and treated Milosevic, who had incited them to mass murder, rape, and wholesale vandalism, as a more or less respectable figure. In 1999, four years after Dayton, 33 prominent foreign policy experts, including John Bolton and Paul Wolfowitz, signed a statement calling on President Clinton to end the "pact with the devil" signed at Dayton and to intervene immediately in Kosovo, the last setting for Milosevic's theater of the macabre. So we did, and Milosevic was stopped.

He was deposed by his countrymen in 2000, deported to The Hague by the Yugoslav government, and put on trial before a special tribunal. At the trial he attempted to present himself as a prescient and courageous defender of the West against al Qaeda. According to him, the murder of elderly Muslim peasants in remote districts of Bosnia or Kosovo was a blow against Islamist terrorism. In 2002, he even tried to claim American government support for the allegation that "mujahedeen" had fought in Kosovo. In reality, while some 2,000-4,000 Saudi-backed "Arab Afghans" intruded into the Bosnian conflict, they failed to influence the course of the fighting, and their form of Islam was repellent to the European Bosnians.

And now the brute will be buried, leaving a legacy of some 250,000 dead (mostly Bosnian Muslims), thousands of victims of rape (also mostly Bosnian Muslims), and the economic and cultural wreckage of the former Yugoslavia. His vision of a Greater Serbia resulted in the reality of a Lesser Serbia, reduced to the country as it existed in 1911, plus war booty taken from the Hungarians after World War I (Vojvodina in the north) and two unhappily acquired possessions that may soon be gone, Montenegro and Kosovo. Montenegro, annexed in 1918, is preparing a referendum on secession from its current "federation" with Serbia for May of this year, and the "final status" of Kosovo, conquered by Serbia in 1912, is being negotiated by the international community.

Milosevic will be remembered as the man who, at the end of the 20th century, reintroduced mass atrocities into a Europe that had ostensibly banished them forever. Milosevic's retro political style included "ethnic cleansing" or mass expulsion; internment in concentration camps; grotesque torture and sexual terrorism; gratuitous slaughter of whole families, villages, even the equivalent of a significant town—8,000 Muslim males at Srebrenica; and the systematic destruction of holy places and cultural landmarks. All was carried out by lawless gangs and "militias," in addition to the Yugoslav army.

Some Western "realists," looking for excuses not to act, could not help asserting the moral equivalence of Milosevic and his victims. But neither the Croats, nor the Bosnian Muslims, nor the Kosovar Albanians ever attacked Serbia or Montenegro. In an attempt at psychological distancing from the crimes of the Belgrade regime, some Westerners harped endlessly on Croatian and Bosnian Muslim collaboration with the Nazis in the Second World War, even though as many or more Croats were anti-fascist Partisans as helped the Nazis, and Bosnian Muslim clerics interceded on behalf of Jewish and Serb victims of the Germans.

Milosevic, the man pushed to the foreground by the crisis, was a mediocrity, like Saddam Hussein or, for that matter, his hero Stalin. Milosevic was a product of Communist rule in a remote provincial town, Pozarevac, in Serbia, and of a narrow, bureaucratic culture. There is no evidence that he cared about the Serb people or Serbian traditions; but he certainly loved authority over others. When he gained power, after working his way through the Tito party system, he used it to posture as a world-historical figure. But he was similar to Vladimir Putin in Russia: an empty vessel waiting to be filled by new ideologies or mafia business opportunities once communism ended.

It is appropriate that Milosevic was an ally of Saddam, who also killed quite a few Muslims—and an ally of other

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anti-Americans. Evil finds its compatriots. So Iraq supplied energy-poor Serbia with oil. Iraq contracted with Serbia for sophisticated weapons and their maintenance. Serbia had a WMD program, including a nuclear bomb effort dating from the Tito years, finally shut down only in 2002, when enough highly enriched uranium for at least two nuclear weapons was removed from an institute near Belgrade in a joint U.S.-Russian effort supported by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Milosevic was also, in his time, supported by the late, unlamented Yasser Arafat, who even invited him to Bethlehem, in the territory of the Palestinian Authority. (Israel blocked the trip by making it clear that, as a good member of the United Nations, it would arrest Milosevic and hand him over to The Hague.) What counted to people like Saddam and Arafat was Serbia's confrontation with America, not its attempted genocide of Bosnian Muslims. And when the U.S.-led coalition went into Iraq in 2003 to remove Saddam (who incidentally was a more direct threat to American interests in 2003 than Milosevic was in 1999), many of the same people opposed that intervention as well. Some acted out of decent motives and made respectable arguments—and some simply liked dictators and hated America. So Slobodan and Saddam ended up sharing the legal help of the disgraceful Ramsey Clark.

Yet the suffering of Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Balkan war of 1992-95 produced important effects. The nightmare of Bosnia—all those people killed only for their names, the rapes, the mosques destroyed down to their foundations—affected Muslims throughout the world, as did the apparent indifference of much of "Christian Europe" to the horror. After all, British policy was shaped not by Lady Thatcher, but by the cruelly shortsighted team of Lord Carrington, Lord Douglas Hurd, and Lord David Owen. U.S. policy did not follow the path recommended by Ronald Reagan or John McCain. It was based first on the pseudo-"realism" of James Baker, then left at the mercy of the fecklessness of Warren Christopher.

So Muslims around the world have not forgotten Bosnia. While Westerners tend to dismiss the Balkans as a fringe area of the Islamic world, many Muslims view Bosnian Islam with respect. Precisely because it suffered, and defended itself, and survived as a community of Islamic believers in the heart of Europe, Bosnia has credibility and prestige among Muslims, from Saudi dissidents to Malayan Sufis.

Bosnian Islam, which showed its moderation during the recent war, therefore represents a real asset for a Europe coming to grips with the Islamic challenge. In the middle of the uproar and shouts—and some brutal slayings—accompanying the recent controversy over the Danish cartoons, the chief Muslim cleric of Bosnia, Mustafa Ceric, issued a Declaration to European Muslims. In an interview with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty accompanying the declaration, Ceric described the text as "a personal act . . . sending a message to the Western audience that we, Bosnian Muslims, did not agree with the terrorist attacks in New York on September 11, 2001, on March 11, 2004, in Madrid, on July 7, 2005, in London."

In the declaration itself, Ceric writes sharply, "Muslims should not be afraid to think about their future in the same way as they should not be possessed by their past. . . . Not only have Muslims failed to produce a genuine idea of globalization, but they are, generally speaking, failing now at living in a global world." In an introduction to the declaration, Ceric argues, "Muslims must realize that the general feeling about their faith in Europe today is unfavorable. European Muslims must take the issue of violence in the name of Islam very seriously, not because some people hate Islam and Muslims, but because the act of violence, the act of terror, the act of hatred in the name of Islam is wrong. . . . European Muslims must develop a program for anti-violence." Ceric reproaches the ruling caste in Muslim countries that "claims to defend Islam, but, in fact . . . uses (or misuses) Islam to cover up its own shortcomings."

Bosnians like Ceric survived the time of Milosevic without sharing in the evil he represented. Such Bosnians can serve as intellectual and moral examples for moderate Muslims around the world. And Europeans can benefit from treating them as trustworthy partners. The death of Milosevic does not close the book on the disaster of the Yugoslav wars; major criminals remain at large. But the fact that Balkan Muslims remained stubbornly commited to civilized values is notable. It deserves to be remembered as people of good will contemplate the future of Islam in Europe and beyond.

—Stephen Schwartz and William Kristol

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It's Hard Out Here for an Iraqi

The story of "Pimp Daddy," an Iraqi detainee at Guantánamo. BY THOMAS JOSCELYN

FOR MORE THAN four years now, critics of the Bush administration have warned that the U.S. detention facility at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, is fueling the Muslim street's hatred of America. The purportedly unwarranted detention of hundreds of Muslims, coupled with the allegedly unjustified invasion of Iraq, these critics argue, will only add to the rage that leads to terrorist attacks.

Following this line of thinking, you might suppose that an Iraqi national at Gitmo would be especially angry. And thanks to the March 3 release of more than 5,000 pages of documents from Gitmo, we can now hear the story of one such Iraqi detainee. His name is Ali Abdul Motalib Hassan al-Tayeea. Or, if you prefer, "Pimp Daddy"—a nickname Gitmo's guards gave him, for reasons that become obvious from the transcript.

Ali was brought before the military tribunal that is determining whether he and the several hundred other Guantánamo detainees should continue to be held as enemy combatants. At the outset of his hearing, Ali thanked America for getting rid of Saddam's "cruel regime," which he said killed one of his uncles. Ali claimed he had escaped service in Saddam's Republican Guard and decried the Butcher of Baghdad's poor treatment of his fellow citizens. He even professed a desire to become an "American person."

So far so good. But then, something odd happened. Ali launched into an obscenity-laden rant that takes up much of the 24-page record of his tribunal proceeding.

He is clearly a very angry man. But why? Is it the occupation of his native Baghdad? His detention at Gitmo?

No. Ali explains:

My problem isn't just that I am poor, or that Saddam's government killed my second uncle. My problem, I'm sorry to say in front of the two ladies, but I want the Judge to know everything about me. I was never a "homo" or gay, but I have a problem. I can't get married because my penis is small-sized. I went to the doctor and they said there is no help. They said I couldn't have an operation or surgery of any kind because I'm poor. I want to get the operation or drugs in America or Europe. Who can help me? . . .

This problem has taken all of my life and my thinking. For example, when I was in school, a lot of my friends were married. I look at my friends and say they have a good life. I can't stay in my house, because my father and mother are waiting very anxiously for me to get married. She says she has a nice girl for me to marry, because she says this is my goal in life. I run away from these questions from my mom. I told her that I want to go to college and be a good person. My family said it was a bulls— reason and that I'm Arab and I can marry and complete my life. I can't stand the sight of my mom, because she says, "my son, I want to see your kids." I just kiss my mom and I say "maybe someday."

In America this is only a little problem, but in my home and in my life, it's very difficult when the days get dark, because I hate running from my people. I feel someday I'll go back to my home and I'm sure that all of my friends are married now. This is not just me in my family; it's also my younger brother. He was born in 1980. He's big and is a nice guy, but has the same problem. I know about my brother, but my family doesn't.

The transcript of Ali's tribunal session is by no means typical. From a terrorism-researcher's perspective there are far more interesting pieces of information contained in the newly released Gitmo documents. There is a secret deal between Iran and the Taliban in 2001, and there are details of a suspected terrorist who was almost smuggled across the Mexican border.

But, like a good episode of the *Jerry Springer* show, there is something compelling about Ali's "candor." He describes a run-in with his commander in the Iraqi military, a Major Abdullah:

He once called me "Kiki"; it means "homo"; . . . it means nice boy. I'm sorry, but he's a motherf—. If I was there, I'd f—ing kill him.

Major Abdullah is not the sole focus of Ali's ire. It seems that virtually everyone in his life has done him wrong. When Ali left Iraq on December 16, 1998, he first made his way to Jordan. He quickly ran out of money, though, and decided to call an uncle in Holland for help:

I charged it to the hotel's phone, because I didn't have any money to go outside to make the call. My uncle never even sent me one Jordanian Dinar. He's an asshole and a motherf—, but he's my uncle and I miss him.

Ali's sister finally came to the rescue, lending him enough money to purchase a visa on which he made his way to Syria. Several months later he left for Turkey, where he was arrested by the "motherf—ing police," who dropped him off in northern Iraq. From there he made his way through Iran to Pakistan and then to Afghanistan.

Ali says he had no love for Osama bin Laden or the Taliban. "I knew there was this little f—er, Osama Bin Laden, and the f—ing Taliban. If I saw Osama Bin Laden, I'd kill him." They say, "Osama Bin Laden is a prophet or something like that. That's bulls—."

Regarding Afghanistan's deposed government, "The Taliban is f—ed up, I'm serious. . . . They pray like 20

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times a day. That's too hard for me. What the f—? I've got to say this 20 times? That's f—ed up."

He got work as a driver for the Taliban, but hated the job.

I don't believe in the Taliban, but being hungry and homeless, I worked there for 2 1/2 months and traveled in an old Russian car called a Gas 66. There are many of these in Iraq; it's a bulls— car. Everyday there was a broken engine, so I requested the money to fix it. I put a little of the money in my pocket and I'd go fix it. I didn't want to go every day. The f—ing Taliban is f—ing my life.

Ali claims he was detained by the Northern Alliance's forces when the war broke out. But his fellow detainees did not think highly of him because he did not conform to their strict grooming rules. The clean-shaven Ali explains that he is a Shiite, and in his religion "only old men have beards. My brother and father have no beard either. The beards are bulls—. They [the Taliban and al Qaeda] have bulls— rules."

While in custody, he met the man known to many as the "American Taliban," John Walker Lindh. Lindh, he says, "was a good guy, I promise. . . . These people, they lie about John Walker. He was a jackass, and he's young and doesn't know anything about the Islamic religion. They just broke his mind and taught him Islamic. Islamic doesn't mean to kill people, like they do. . . . I'm not a jackass."

From the Northern Alliance, Ali was transferred to American custody. But, even at Gitmo, Ali's fellow detainees don't think much of him:

They call me motherf— all the time and I say, "f— Osama Bin Laden and f— the Taliban." I'm very happy and I tell them I'll stay here forever and give information about them. I tell them, "f— you, if you believe in Osama Bin Laden."

There is no hint of Ali's fate in the transcript. The tribunal board continually reiterates that it doesn't have the power to make an immediate decision. For all of Ali's troubles, he says, he would like to be freed and serve America. If the U.S. military won't take him, there's always hip-hop. Or Yale. ♦

Change the Subject

The Republican strategy for 2006.

BY FRED BARNES

Ken Mehlman

Getty / Chip Somodevilla

POLITICS IS PRETTY SIMPLE. If the debate in an upcoming election puts your party at a disadvantage, it makes sense to try to change the debate. At the moment, the 2006 midterm election is framed as a referendum on the Bush administration and congressional Republicans, putting Republican candidates on the defensive. Party strategists, led by chairman Ken Mehlman, want to rejigger the debate so it's about a choice between candidates, putting Democratic candidates on the defensive as well. In short, they want it to be a choice election, not a referendum election.

This is not a new idea. Republicans brought about a choice election in 2004. Democrats believed they were a cinch to win a referendum on President Bush's first term, and Republicans worried they were right. But Republicans were able to make Democrat John Kerry at least as much of an issue as Bush was, especially on national security.

For 2006, the Republican National Committee, the White House, and most Senate and House Republicans are on board with the choice strategy. In fact, some members of Congress are already repeating a phrase first used by Bush in meetings with congressional allies. It's an assertion that Democrats would "raise your taxes and raise the white flag" in Iraq.

There's another part of the 2006 Republican strategy. This spring and summer, Republican leaders in the Senate and House plan to bring up a series of issues that are popular with the Republican base of voters. The aim is to stir conservative voters and

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spur turnout in the November election. Just last week, House Majority Leader John Boehner and Whip Roy Blunt met with leaders of conservative groups to talk about these issues.

House Republicans, for their part, intend to seek votes on measures such as the Bush-backed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage, a bill allowing more public expression of religion, another requiring parental consent for women under 18 to get an abortion, legislation to bar all federal courts except the Supreme Court from ruling on the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance, a bill to outlaw human cloning, and another that would require doctors to consider fetal pain before performing an abortion.

Two pollsters consulted by Mehlman on the choice strategy said it would be counterproductive for Republican candidates to concentrate on highlighting their differences with Bush or congressional Republicans. Of course this is not exactly disinterested advice. Mehlman and company all want to help the president, who stands to lose most from Republicans' adopting an "I'm not like Bush" strategy.

Dave Sackett of the Tarrance Group said, in a memo to Mehlman, that distancing oneself from the president is a "flawed strategy" and would not protect a Republican candidate "from the generic backlash against the administration or the congressional leadership." Rather, it would turn the campaign into "a national referendum on President Bush and the policies of the administration and the congressional leadership"—just what Republicans fear in 2006. Jan van Lohuizen of Voter/Consumer Research said a campaign that becomes a referendum on Bush could also chill Republican voter turnout. "Anything we do to depress turnout, by not running as a unified party, for instance, could very well lead to serious consequences in November."

Republicans have done little to hide their strategy. At the Southern Republican Leadership conference in Memphis recently, Mehlman spoke repeatedly about "choice" in the 2006 election. Voters, he said, "can see the difference between leaders committed to winning this war [on terror] and politicians who will say anything to win the next election. The war on terror is not the only area where we face an urgent choice in 2006."

Mehlman asked, rhetorically, if voters "want the chairman of the tax-writing committee in the House to be someone who said that tax *increases* would spur the economy. Do you want the speaker of the House to be someone who said, less than a year after 9/11, 'I don't really consider ourselves at war.'" That, Mehlman said, "is the choice we will make in 242 days."

Mehlman is convinced the emphasis on choice will work. "The ultimate referendum election is a presi-

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dential reelection," he says. "If you can make that into a choice election, you can make a midterm election into a choice election."

Some Republicans insist it doesn't matter whether Democrats finally offer a party agenda. "The question is not what they promise," Mehlman told me. "It's what they are going to do" that is important.

Blunt, however, wants to force Democrats to present an agenda. Contrasted with Democratic plans, "our ideas always look better," he says. "Their best day will be the day before they release their agenda. Suddenly [Republican] policies will look like the policies that would work best in the future."

A White House official says the choice strategy "is the means to go on offense," instead of merely defending the controversial or unpopular actions of the Bush administration. There are numerous "luscious targets" offered by Democrats, including the fact that two-thirds of House Democrats voted against the reauthorization of the Patriot Act and three-fourths of congressional Democrats opposed the president's tax cuts.

One issue that needs to be developed is the economy, according to Blunt. "People take a strong economy for granted. We have to show that this didn't just happen," but is the result of Republican policies like tax cuts. Republican candidates will argue that if Democratic policies had been followed, a strong economic recovery would not have occurred. And job creation—243,000 in February—would have been weaker.

Mehlman's confidence notwithstanding, will Republican efforts to keep the election debate from focusing on Bush really work? The media undoubtedly won't play along. Some Republicans are bound to trash Bush, figuring that it will give them the best chance of winning. Worse, if Bush falters badly, a referendum on him may be unavoidable. Still, is there a better strategy for Republicans in what looks like an unfriendly year for them? If there is, I haven't heard of it. ♦

What's the Matter with Kansas?

The state contemplates going into the casino business. BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

SUSAN WAGLE is a busy Republican state senator from Sedgwick County, Kansas. In general, she is busy running for lieutenant governor, but more recently she has been busy preventing Kansas from becoming the first state in the country to own and operate casinos. Last week, thanks in part to Wagle's efforts, the state senate defeated—by a vote of 20 to 16, with 4 abstentions—a bill (SB 587) that would not only have put Kansas in the casino business, but would also have expanded racetrack gambling, video slots, and poker.

"We need to stand up and say enough is enough," Wagle told me. The odds are against her. In 1975, gambling was permitted in only one state. Now every state but two has legalized some game or other. Gambling is an $80 billion-a-year industry. State governments rely heavily on lotteries as a source of revenue. ESPN's *World Series of Poker* has made celebrities of professional gamblers. And books about poker enjoy widespread sales.

Though technically illegal, Internet gambling is thriving. Last year, one online poker executive told *60 Minutes* that he believes "about 12 and a half million Americans now use Internet gambling in its widest form." The gambling industry has insinuated itself into American culture and politics to such an extent that, if games were suddenly banned, the fiscal footing of many state governments would be undermined.

Kansas is a typical case. "We're not thrilled about gaming, but we're surrounded by it," Matthew All said. All is chief counsel to Kansas's Democratic governor, Kathleen Sebelius, and he has a point. In 1987, Kansas established its state lottery. Today, in addition to the lottery, two counties have dog- and horse-racing tracks, and four Indian tribes operate casinos.

A look at the Kansas lottery suggests legalized gambling's benefits—and its costs. Between the lotto's creation and June 30, 2005, some $844,683,570 was poured into state coffers, according to the lottery's official website. Where does the money go? The "Problem Gaming Grant Fund," the "Juvenile Detention Facilities Fund," and the "Correctional Institutions Building Fund," for starters. Some also goes to the "Economic Development Initiatives Fund," and any excess revenues go to the "State General Fund," where it is allocated at the legislature's discretion.

Gambling is an extremely easy way for a state government to raise money. Thus it is not surprising that, when confronted with a financial shortfall, states look to foster more gambling. Here, too, Kansas is typical. On January 3, 2005, the State Supreme Court ruled that the legislature was not spending enough money on public schools. A flurry of litigation ensued in which the court worked out the precise amount of money that it felt should be spent on education. The amount: $853 million over two years.

The state legislature, under Republican control, ruled out any tax increase. Over time, Governor Sebelius, in consultation with the state senate Republican leadership, settled on a compromise that would have increased

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gambling revenues in order to fill the gaping financial hole. There were two options: more Indian casinos, or state-owned and -operated casinos. The tribal option presented difficulties of its own. Since the federal government regulates tribal gambling, the state would have to enlist its federal representatives.

So in late January 2006, chief counsel All sent Sen. Sam Brownback and Rep. Todd Tiahrt a letter requesting their assistance in lobbying the Department of Interior to expand Indian gambling in Kansas. The legislators denied the request. "Gambling visits a host of social problems upon gamblers themselves," Brownback and Tiahrt's chiefs of staff replied in a joint January 25 letter, "particularly those most vulnerable. Financial losses or bankruptcy, addiction, drug and alcohol abuse, higher divorce and suicide rates, and other harms have long plagued casino patrons."

That left the state-casino option, which led to SB 587. Under the bill, the state government would allow two casinos to be built, and would permit racetracks to operate electronic games such as slots and video poker. The state would choose the games, set odds, and conduct audits. But the casinos themselves would be run by private entities. Those entities would cover all expenses, including construction and payroll costs. The state's take would be at least 24 percent of gross revenue, of which 75 percent would go to the state education fund.

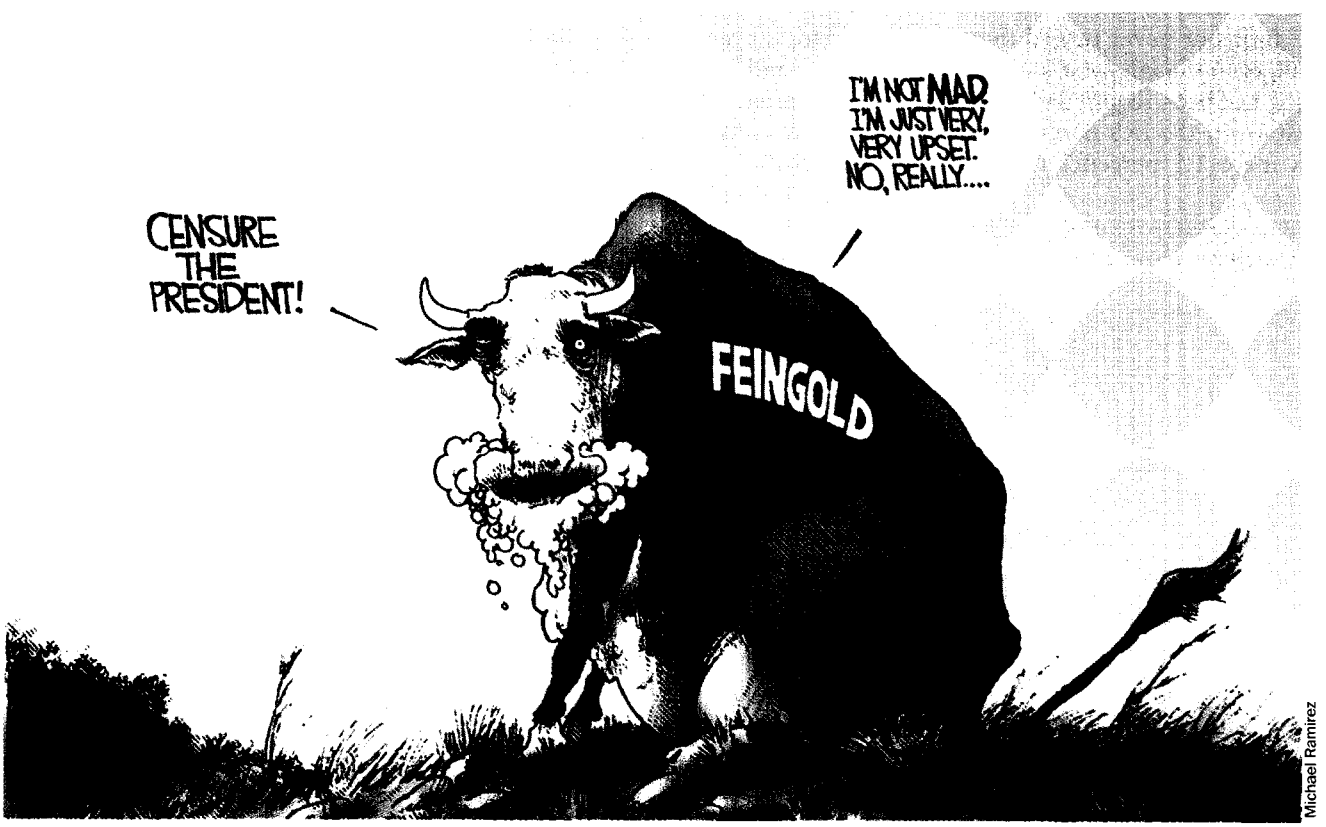
According to All, a similar arrangement is found in two Canadian provinces, Ontario and Saskatchewan. A seven-person commission would choose among several bidders for the exclusive casino contracts. The president of the senate and speaker of the house would each appoint two members to the commission. The governor would appoint three. The contracts would be awarded, initially, for a maximum of 15 years.

It is all too easy to see the manifold opportunities for graft and cronyism under such an arrangement. Last week, for example, the *Kansas City Star* reported that gambling-related campaign contributions had increased by 300 percent since the year 2000.

Yet the most vociferous opposition to the casino bill came not from good-government types, but from the Indian casino owners, who understood that competition from the state would threaten their profits. On March 10, Ron Hein, a Topeka attorney who represents tribal casinos, testified before the state senate's federal and state affairs committee. "If the intent of this legislation is to insure that everyone in the state is within close proximity to a gaming machine," Hein said, "then this bill fulfills that expansive intent."

In the end, the various interests at work—the tribes, the private casino companies, the antitax legislature, and those who are troubled by the social effects of gambling and the moral implications of government feeding off the vices of its own citizens—cancelled each other out. For now, Kansas will not own casinos. "It was a very ugly debate," Wagle said.

And it was probably the first of many. "The bill is dead," All emailed from his office in the Kansas state house last week. "But the issue isn't exactly dead. I'd describe it as undead. It will continue to haunt this building until we finally put it to rest." ♦



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Union Dues and Don'ts

Financial disclosure is a wonderful thing.

BY JOSEPH LINDSLEY

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, the Department of Labor is seriously enforcing its financial reporting requirements of unions and disclosing the results online. As a result, union members—and the public at large—now have the means to examine union finances in extraordinary detail and to learn about the outside activities and potential conflicts of interest of union officials. The purpose of this newfound transparency is to promote fiscal integrity and union democracy.

Previously, the department's record of enforcing its reporting requirements was dismal. As recently as 2002, 43 percent of unions were either tardy in submitting their LM-2 forms or never turned them in at all, even though some sort of reporting had been required since 1959. By contrast, the IRS nonfiling rate was a mere 1.5 percent, and after the Federal Elections Commission introduced civil financial penalties for noncompliance (also in 2002), compliance improved from 82 percent to 85 percent.

Labor long suffered from what a senior department official called a "classic big government problem": Union financial disclosure involved a good deal of paperwork, most of it providing information so vague it was useless—which left little incentive to go after nonfilers. In an effort to encourage greater union transparency, Congress during the Clinton administration mandated that the completed LM-2 forms be available online. It was left to George W. Bush's secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao, however, to actually enforce this—and to require more detail into the bargain. The new, more elaborate reports are now available and searchable online as soon as a union files electronically.

Some might ask why government should require this level of transparency of labor unions, the champions of America's working men and women. In response, Chao's department sees itself as the labor equivalent of the Securities and Exchange Commission. Although a number of unions have, after some hesitation about privacy concerns, welcomed the increased scrutiny, the "absolutists," as a Labor Department official terms them, have cried foul. When Labor announced the new requirements in 2003, the AFL-CIO, in a 218-page document, projected that compliance could cost its affiliated national and local unions an average of $1,239,482 for international and national unions and $217,509 for local unions. In reality, according to its own LM-2, the AFL-CIO's national headquarters spent just $54,150 in 2005 on software needed to compile the necessary data—though it spent another $121,367 litigating against having to do so.

A few days spent perusing the spreadsheets of the 20 percent of unions that have already submitted their LM-2s for fiscal year 2005 showed that many unions have reported their affairs in detail—down to the $97,888 made by the enterprising Retiree Chapter Local 455 of the UAW in bingo income. Other numbers may raise eyebrows. Gerald B. Ellis, for example, made $116,703 in 2004 as a business manager at Local 627 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, a member of the AFL-CIO. Local 627 also buys $86,400 worth of legal services from the one-man law firm Gerald B. Ellis, Inc., nicely padding its business manager's income.

And how about the lavish destination meetings enjoyed by the AFL-CIO's executive council: As the private watchdog organization the Center for Union Facts reported recently after it followed the super-union's executive council to its retreat in California, the 46 members of the council stayed at the pricey Hotel del Coronado (check the Labor Department's website next year for dollar amounts) at a time when the Carpenters' Union was picketing

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that very hotel—hypocrisy one might expect of a politician (say, Nancy Pelosi, who won't allow workers at her Napa Valley hotel to unionize), but surely not of labor bosses, right?

Or consider Linda Chavez-Thompson, an AFL-CIO executive who also serves as vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee. In explaining potential conflicts of interest on union disclosure reports, she writes, "I eat very little at the various receptions, events and meetings I attend, certainly far less than $25 worth of food or drink at any particular event." She further explains that the DNC spent "no more than" $10,000 on her attendance at events such as the DNC Hispanic Caucus—while noting further that the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education's voluntary fund donates $15,000 to the DNC.

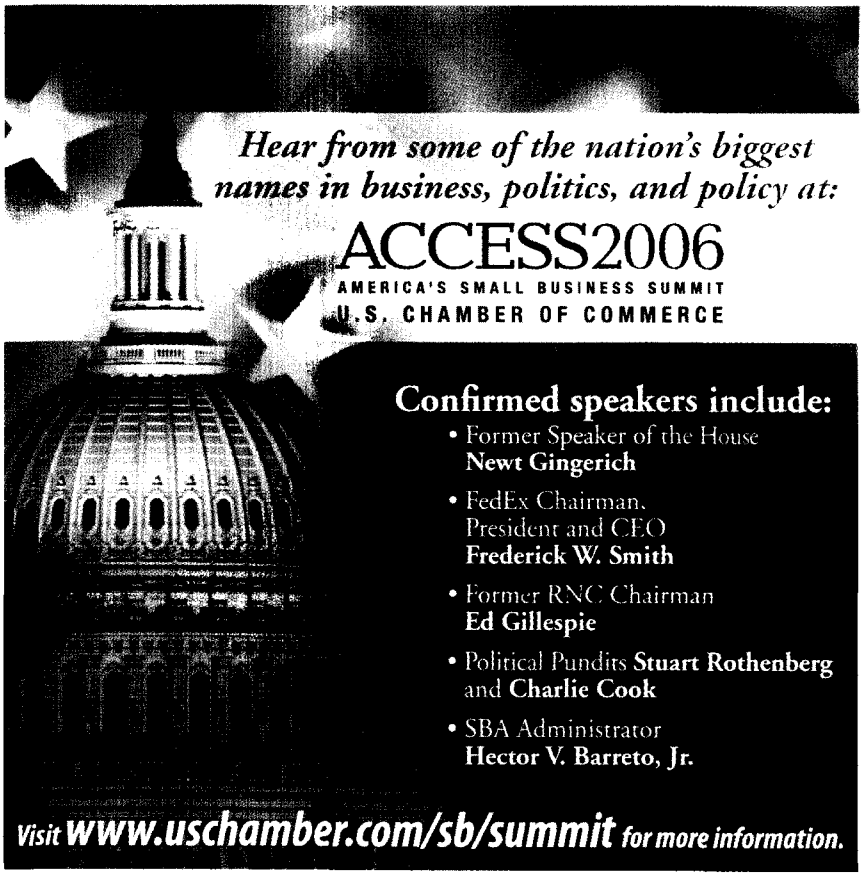
The National Education Association, which refused an interview request "at this time," has its share of fun as well. The teachers' union disclosure report states that $59,646 was spent at a Charlotte, N.C., store called Morris Costumes. (This sum was divided between two categories: "overhead" and "union administration.") NEA leaders do more than party; they also campaign for politicians. They report $24 million spent on political activities in 2005.

Naturally, much of this political money goes to Democrats. The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees gives 99 percent of its $8,527,370 in political funds to Democrats. Surely the union has some Republican and Independent union members, which may be why the Service Employees International Union and several other major unions have broken away from the AFL-CIO to form the Change to Win coalition. Some speculate that this coalition might become more popular if members are privy to their unions' detailed records.

Now they can peruse the Labor Department's website and learn, for instance, that the AFL-CIO gave $55,000 to the peacenik group Pax Christi; $152,250 to the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, which takes positions on policy issues ranging from Iraq to judicial nominations; $150,000 to the liberal Economic Policy Institute for "general support for economic research"; $113,400 to Pride at Work, an advocacy group "for LGBT workers and families"; and $360,466 for the printing of John Kerry fliers. The AFL-CIO is involved in education as well: It awarded $120,000 to Cornell's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and $6,703,927 to its own George Meaney Center for Labor Studies, a degree-awarding institution in suburban Washington.

Unofficially assisting in the Labor Department's effort is the Center for Union Facts's user-friendly, chart-filled website, which will tell you everything you ever wanted to know about union corruption. Visitors to the site can learn about the 322 racketeering indictments against organized labor in 2005; the 13,815 discrimination complaints filed since 2000; and the 65 percent of the "decertification" elections held in 2004 in which employees dissociated their workplace from a union.

Opponents of the new efforts at opening the hallowed halls of organized labor to scrutiny say it is unfair to go after labor union excesses when many corporations overpay their top executives and enjoy lavish expense accounts. Be that as it may, the new requirements are designed, as the senior Labor Department official said, "to empower union members themselves and to hold their officers accountable. . . . Increased transparency will make union members more informed consumers." It's the American way. As James Madison wrote, "If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary." The new external controls on unions are intended to protect them from men who are not angels. ♦



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Saddam's Philippines Terror Connection

And other revelations from the Iraqi files

By Stephen F. Hayes

Saddam Hussein's regime provided financial support to Abu Sayyaf, the al Qaeda-linked jihadist group founded by Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law in the Philippines in the late 1990s, according to documents captured in postwar Iraq. An eight-page fax dated June 6, 2001, and sent from the Iraqi ambassador in Manila to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Baghdad, provides an update on Abu Sayyaf kidnappings and indicates that the Iraqi regime was providing the group with money to purchase weapons. The Iraqi regime suspended its support—temporarily, it seems—after high-profile kidnappings, including of Americans, focused international attention on the terrorist group.

The fax comes from the vast collection of documents recovered in postwar Afghanistan and Iraq. Up to this point, those materials have been kept from the American public. Now the proverbial dam has broken. On March 16, the U.S. government posted on the web 9 documents captured in Iraq, as well as 28 al Qaeda documents that had been released in February. Earlier last week, *Foreign Affairs* magazine published a lengthy article based on a review of 700 Iraqi documents by analysts with the Institute for Defense Analysis and the Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia. Plans for the release of many more documents have been announced. And if the contents of the recently released materials and other documents obtained by The Weekly Standard are any indication, the discussion of the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's Iraq is about to get more interesting.

Several months ago, The Weekly Standard received a set of English-language documents from a senior U.S. government official. The official represented this material as U.S. government translations of three captured Iraqi documents. According to this source, the documents had been examined by the U.S. intelligence community and judged "consistent with authentic documents"—the professionals' way of saying that these items cannot definitively be certified but seem to be the real thing.

The Weekly Standard checked its English-language documents with officials serving elsewhere in the federal government to make sure they were consistent with the versions these officials had seen. With what one person characterized as "minor discrepancies," they are. One of the three documents has been posted in the original Arabic on the website of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. A subsequent translation of that document is nearly identical to the English-language text that we were given.

These documents add to the growing body of evidence confirming the Iraqi regime's longtime support for terrorism abroad. The first of them, a series of memos from the spring of 2001, shows that the Iraqi Intelligence Service funded Abu Sayyaf, despite the reservations of some IIS officials. The second, an internal Iraqi Intelligence memo on the relationships between the IIS and Saudi opposition groups, records that Osama bin Laden requested Iraqi cooperation on terrorism and propaganda and that in January 1997 the Iraqi regime was eager to continue its relationship with bin Laden. The third, a September 15, 2001, report from an Iraqi Intelligence source in Afghanistan, contains speculation about the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda and the likely U.S. response to it.

On June 6, 2001, the Iraqi ambassador to the Philippines sent an eight-page fax to Baghdad. Ambassador Salah Samarmad's dispatch to the Secondary Policy Directorate of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry concerned an Abu Sayyaf kidnapping a week earlier that had garnered international attention. Twenty civilians—including three Americans—had been taken from Dos Palmas Resort on Palawan Island in the southern

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Philippines. There had been fighting between the kidnappers and the Filipino military, Samarmad reported. Several hostages had escaped, and others were released.

"After the release of nine of the hostages, an announcement from the FBI appeared in newspapers announcing their desire to interview the escaped Filipinos in order to make a decision on the status of the three American hostages," the Iraqi ambassador wrote to his superiors in Baghdad. "The embassy stated what was mentioned above. The three American hostages were a missionary husband and wife who had lived in the Philippines for a while, Martin and Gracia Burnham, from Kansas City, and Guillermo Sobrero, from California. They are still in the hands of the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers from a total of 20 people who were kidnapped from (Dos Palmas) resort on Palawan Island." (Except where noted, parentheses, brackets, and ellipses appear in the documents quoted.)

The report notes that the Iraqis were now trying to be seen as helpful and keep a safe distance from Abu Sayyaf. "We have all cooperated in the field of intelligence information with some of our friends to encourage the tourists and the investors in the Philippines." But Samarmad's report seems to confirm that this is a change. "The kidnappers were formerly (from the previous year) receiving money and purchasing combat weapons. From now on we (IIS) are not giving them this opportunity and are not on speaking terms with them."

Samarmad's dispatch appears to be the final installment in a series of internal Iraqi regime memos from March through June 2001. (The U.S. government translated some of these documents in full and summarized others.) The memos contain a lengthy discussion among Iraqi officials—from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Iraqi Intelligence Service—about the wisdom of using a Libyan intelligence front as a way to channel Iraqi support for Abu Sayyaf without the risks of dealing directly with the group. (The Libyan regime had intervened in an Abu Sayyaf kidnapping in 2000, securing the release of several hostages by paying several million dollars in ransom. Some observers saw this as an effort by Muammar Qaddafi to improve his image; others saw it as an effort to provide support to Abu Sayyaf by paying the ransom demanded by the group. Both were probably right.)

One Iraqi memo, from the "Republican Presidency, Intelligence Apparatus" to someone identified only as D4/4, makes the case for supporting the work of the Qaddafi Charity Establishment to help Abu Sayyaf. The memo is dated March 18, 2001.

> 1. There are connections between the Qaddafi Charity Establishment and the Abu Sayyaf group in the Philippines; meanwhile, this establishment is providing material support to them.
>
> 2. This establishment is one of the Libyan Intelligence fronts.
>
> 3. The Tripoli post has indicated that there is a possibility to form what connections are available with this establishment as it can offer the premise of providing food supplies to [Ed: word missing] in the scope of the agreement statement.
>
> Please review . . . it appears of intelligence value to proceed into connections with this establishment and its intelligence investments in the Abu Sayyaf group.

The short response, two days later:

> Mr. Dept. 3:
> Study this idea, the pros and the cons, the relative reactions, and any other remarks regarding this.

That exchange above was fully translated by U.S. government translators. The two pages of correspondence that follow it in the Iraqi files were not, but a summary of those pages informs readers that the Iraqi response "discourages the supporting of connections with the Abu Sayyaf group, as the group works against the Philippine government and relies on several methods for material gain, such as kidnapping foreigners, demanding ransoms, as well as being accused by the Philippine government of terrorist acts and drug smuggling."

These accusations were, of course, well founded. On June 12, 2001, six days after Samarmad's dispatch, authorities found the beheaded body of Guillermo Sobrero near the Abu Sayyaf camp. Martin Burnham was killed a year later during the rescue attempt that freed his wife.

A thorough understanding of the relationship between Iraq and Abu Sayyaf (the name, honoring Afghan jihadi Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, means "Father of the Sword") will not come from an analysis of three months' correspondence between Manila and Baghdad in 2001. While it is certainly significant to read in internal Iraqi documents that the regime was at one time funding Abu Sayyaf, we do not now have a complete picture of that relationship. Why did the Iraqis begin funding Abu Sayyaf, which had long been considered a regional terrorist group concerned mainly with making money? Why did they suspend their support in 2001? And why did the Iraqis resume this relationship and, according to the congressional testimony of one State Department regional specialist, intensify it?

On March 26, 2003, as war raged in Iraq, the State Department's Matthew Daley testified before Congress. Daley, the deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, told a subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee that he was worried about Abu Sayyaf.

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AFP / Conrado Maralit

Investigating the bomb that killed SFC Mark Wayne Jackson

"We're concerned that they have what I would call operational links to Iraqi intelligence services. And they're a danger, they're an enemy of the Philippines, they're an enemy of the United States, and we want very much to help the government in Manila deal with this challenge," Daley told the panel. Responding to a question, Daley elaborated. "There is good reason to believe that a member of the Abu Sayyaf Group who has been involved in terrorist activities was in direct contact with an IIS officer in the Iraqi Embassy in Manila. This individual was subsequently expelled from the Philippines for engaging in activities that were incompatible with his diplomatic status."

This individual was Hisham Hussein, the second secretary of the Iraqi Embassy in Manila. And Daley was right to be concerned.

Eighteen months before his testimony, a young Filipino man rode his Honda motorcycle up a dusty road to a shanty strip mall just outside Camp Enrile Malagutay in Zamboanga City, Philippines. The camp was host to American troops stationed in the south of the country to train with Filipino soldiers fighting terrorists. The man parked his bike and began to examine its gas tank. Seconds later, the tank exploded, sending nails in all directions and killing the rider almost instantly.

The blast damaged six nearby stores and ripped the front off of a café that doubled as a karaoke bar. The café was popular with American soldiers. And on this day, October 2, 2002, SFC Mark Wayne Jackson was killed there and a fellow soldier was severely wounded. Eyewitnesses almost immediately identified the bomber as an Abu Sayyaf terrorist.

One week before the attack, Abu Sayyaf leaders had promised a campaign of terror directed at the "enemies of Islam"—Westerners and the non-Muslim Filipino majority. And one week after the attack, Abu Sayyaf attempted to strike again, this time with a bomb placed on the playground of the San Roque Elementary School. It did not detonate. Authorities recovered the cell phone that was to have set it off and analyzed incoming and outgoing calls.

As they might have expected, they discovered several calls to and from Abu Sayyaf leaders. But another call got their attention. Seventeen hours after the attack that took the life of SFC Jackson, the cell phone was used to place a call to the second secretary of the Iraqi embassy in Manila, Hisham Hussein. It was not Hussein's only contact with Abu Sayyaf.

"He was surveilled, and we found out he was in contact with Abu Sayyaf and also pro-Iraqi demonstrators," says a Philippine government source, who continued, "[Philippine intelligence] was able to monitor their cell phone calls. [Abu Sayyaf leaders] called him right after the bombing. They were always talking."

An analysis of Iraqi embassy phone records by Philippine authorities showed that Hussein had been in regular contact with Abu Sayyaf leaders both before and after the attack that killed SFC Jackson. Andrea Domingo, immigration commissioner for the Philippines, said Hussein ran an "established network" of terrorists in the country. Hussein had also met with members of the New People's Army, a Communist opposition group on the State Department's list of foreign terrorist groups, in his office at the embassy. According to a Philippine government official, the Philippine National Police uncovered documents in a New People's Army compound that indicate the Iraqi embassy had provided funding for the group. Hisham Hussein and two other Iraqi embassy employees were ordered out of the Philippines on February 14, 2003.

Interestingly, an Abu Sayyaf leader named Hamsiraji Sali at least twice publicly boasted that his group received funding from Iraq. For instance, on March 2, 2003, he told the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* that the Iraqi regime had provided the terrorist group with 1 million pesos—about $20,000—each year since 2000.

Another item from the Iraq-Philippines files is a "security report" prepared by the Iraqi embassy's third secretary, Ahmad Mahmud Ghalib, and sent to Baghdad by Ambassador Samarmad.

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The report provides a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the Iraqi Intelligence operation in the Philippines. A cover memo from the ambassador, dated April 12, 2001, gives an overview: "The report contain[s] a variety of issues including intelligence issues and how the Philippines, American and Zionist intelligence operate in the Philippines, especially the movements of the American intelligence in their efforts to fight terrorism and recruiting a variety of nationalities, particularly Arabs."

Ghalib's report is a rambling account of a phone conversation he had with an Iraqi intelligence informer named Muhammad al-Zanki, an Iraqi citizen living in the Philippines, who is referred to throughout the document as Abu Ahmad. The embassy official is looking for information on a third person, an informer named Omar Ghazal, and believes that Abu Ahmad might have some. (To review: Salah Samarmad is the Iraqi ambassador; Ahmad Mahmud Ghalib is the embassy's third secretary, most likely an Iraqi intelligence officer and author of the "security report"; Abu Ahmad is an Iraqi intelligence informer; and Omar Ghazal is another Iraqi intelligence informer.)

As the conversation begins, Abu Ahmad tells his embassy contact that he doesn't know where Omar Ghazal is and would have told the embassy if he did. He then tells the embassy contact that when he called Omar Ghazal's aunt to check on his whereabouts, she used a word in Tagalog—*walana*—which means "not here." But Abu Ahmad says its connotations are not good. "That word is used when you target one of the personnel who are assigned to complete everything (full mission). Then they announce that he is traveling and so on, and that's what I'm afraid of." The Iraqi embassy contact asks him to elaborate. "I have been exposed to that same phrase before, when I asked about an individual, and later on I found out that he was physically eliminated and no one knows anything about him."

The embassy official assures Abu Ahmad that Iraqi intelligence has also lost track of Ghazal, and became alarmed when he abruptly stopped attending soccer practice at a local college. Abu Ahmad fears the worst. "I'm afraid they might have killed him and I'm very worried about him," he says, according to the report. "The method that those people use is terrible and that's why I refuse to work with them."

The Iraqi embassy official interrupts Abu Ahmad. "Who are they? I would like to know who they are."

"Didn't I tell you before who they are?"

"No."

"The office group," says Abu Ahmad.

"Which office?" asks his Iraqi embassy handler.

"A long time ago the American FBI opened up an office in the Philippines, under American supervision and that there are Philippine Intelligence groups that work there. The goal of the office is to fight international terrorism (in the Philippines of course) and they have employees from various nationalities that speak of peace and international terrorism and how important it is to put an end to terrorism. The office also has other espionage affairs involving Arab citizens to work with them in order to provide them with information on the Arabs who are living in the Philippines and also for other spying purposes."

Abu Ahmad continues: "They also monitor diplomacy, and after I tried to lessen my amount of office work, I became aware that the office group was trying to get in contact with the person who is in charge of temporary work, Malik al-Athir, when he was alone."

Abu Ahmad tells his Iraqi embassy contact, Ghalib, that "the office" was trying to recruit an Arab to monitor Arab citizens in the Philippines. The Iraqi embassy contact suggests that Abu Ahmad volunteer for the job. Abu Ahmad says he had other plans. "I am leaving after I finish selling my house and properties and will move to Peshawar [Pakistan]. There I will be supplied with materials, weapons, explosives, and get married and then move to America. Do you know that there are more than one thousand Iraqi extremists who perform heroism jobs?" The speaker presumably means martyrdom operations.

The Iraqi embassy contact asks Abu Ahmad how he knows that those people are not "Saudis, Kuwaitis, Iranians."

Abu Ahmad replies: "They are bin Laden's people and all of them are extremists and they are heroes. Do you want me to give you their names?"

"Why not? Yes, I want them," says the Iraqi embassy contact.

"I will supply you with the names very soon. I will write some for you because I am in touch with them," says Abu Ahmad.

This report raises more questions than it answers. Who is Omar Ghazal and why did he disappear? What is the "office group" and how is it connected to Americans? What happened to Abu Ahmad? Were his stated plans—moving to Peshawar to obtain weapons and explosives and then moving to the United States—just bluster to impress his Iraqi embassy handler? A way to discontinue his work for the Iraqi regime? Or was he serious? Is he here now?

A second internal Iraqi file obtained by THE WEEKLY STANDARD concerns relations between Iraqi Intelligence and Saudi opposition groups.

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The document was apparently compiled at some point after January 1997, judging by the most recent date in the text, and discusses four Saudi opposition groups: the Committee for Defense of Legitimate Rights, the Reform and Advice Committee (Osama bin Laden), People of al Jazeera Union Organization, and the Saudi Hezbollah.

The *New York Times* first reported on the existence of this file on June 25, 2004. "American officials described the document as an internal report by the Iraqi intelligence service detailing efforts to seek cooperation with several Saudi opposition groups, including Mr. bin Laden's organization, before al Qaeda had become a full-fledged terrorist organization." According to the *Times*, a Pentagon task force "concluded that the document 'appeared authentic,' and that it 'corroborates and expands on previous reporting' about contacts between Iraqi intelligence and Mr. bin Laden in Sudan, according to the task force's analysis."

The most provocative aspect of the document is the discussion of efforts to seek cooperation between Iraqi Intelligence and the Saudi opposition group run by bin Laden, known to the Iraqis as the "Reform and Advice Committee." The translation of that section appears below.

> We moved towards the committee by doing the following:
>
> A. During the visit of the Sudanese Dr. Ibrahim al-Sanusi to Iraq and his meeting with Mr. Uday Saddam Hussein, on December 13, 1994, in the presence of the respectable, Mr. Director of the Intelligence Service, he [Dr. al-Sanusi] pointed out that the opposing Osama bin Laden, residing in Sudan, is reserved and afraid to be depicted by his enemies as an agent of Iraq. We prepared to meet him in Sudan (The Honorable Presidency was informed of the results of the meeting in our letter 782 on December 17, 1994).
>
> B. An approval to meet with opposer Osama bin Laden by the Intelligence Services was given by the Honorable Presidency in its letter 138, dated January 11, 1995 (attachment 6). He [bin Laden] was met by the previous general director of M4 in Sudan and in the presence of the Sudanese, Ibrahim al-Sanusi, on February 19, 1995. We discussed with him his organization. He requested the broadcast of the speeches of Sheikh Sulayman al-Uda (who has influence within Saudi Arabia and outside due to being a well known religious and influential personality) and to designate a program for them through the broadcast directed inside Iraq, and to perform joint operations against the foreign forces in the land of Hijaz. (The Honorable Presidency was informed of the details of the meeting in our letter 370 on March 4, 1995, attachment 7.)
>
> C. The approval was received from the Leader, Mr. President, may God keep him, to designate a program for them through the directed broadcast. We were left to develop the relationship and the cooperation between the two sides to see what other doors of cooperation and agreement open up. The Sudanese side was informed of the Honorable Presidency's agreement above, through the representative of the Respectable Director of Intelligence Services, our Ambassador in Khartoum.
>
> D. Due to the recent situation of Sudan and being accused of supporting and embracing of terrorism, an agreement with the opposing Saudi Osama bin Laden was reached. The agreement required him to leave Sudan to another area. He left Khartoum in July 1996. The information we have indicates that he is currently in Afghanistan. The relationship with him is ongoing through the Sudanese side. Currently we are working to invigorate this relationship through a new channel in light of his present location.

(It should be noted that the documents given to THE WEEKLY STANDARD did not include the attachments, letters to and from Saddam Hussein about the status of the Iraq-al Qaeda relationship. And the last sentence differs slightly from the version provided to the *New York Times*. In the WEEKLY STANDARD document, Iraq is seeking to "invigorate" its relationship with al Qaeda; in the *Times* translation, Iraq is seeking to "continue" that relationship.)

Another passage of the Iraq-Saudi opposition memo details the relationship between the Iraqi regime and the Committee for Defense of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), founded by Dr. Muhammad Abdallah al-Massari. Once again, Dr. Ibrahim al-Sanusi, the senior Sudanese government official, was a key liaison between the two sides. Al-Massari is widely regarded as an ideological mouthpiece for al Qaeda, a designation he does little to dispute. His radio station broadcasts al Qaeda propaganda, and his website features the rantings of prominent jihadists. He has lived in London for more than a decade. The Iraqi Intelligence memo recounts two meetings involving Dr. al-Sanusi and CDLR representatives in 1994 and reports that al-Massari requested assistance from the Iraqi regime for a trip to Iraq.

In 1995, the Iraqis turned to another Saudi to facilitate their relationship with al-Massari. According to the Iraqi memo, Ahmid Khudir al-Zahrani was a diplomat at the Saudi embassy in Washington who applied for political asylum in the United States. His application was denied, and al-Zahrani contacted the Iraqi embassy in London, seeking asylum in Iraq. His timing was good. Al-Zahrani's request came just as Iraqis were stepping up efforts to establish better relations with the Saudi opposition. According to the Iraqi Intelligence memo:

> A complete plan was put in place to bring the aforementioned [al-Zahrani] to Iraq in coordination with the Foreign Ministry and our [intelligence] station in Khartoum

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Reuters / Corbis / Romeo Ranoco

A saleswoman displays Osama bin Laden T-shirts during a Christmas sale at the mall of Zamboanga, southern Philippines, December 19, 2001.

[Sudan]. He and his family were issued Iraqi passports with pseudonyms by our embassy in Khartoum. He arrived to Iraq on April 21, 1995, and multiple meetings were held with him to obtain information about the Saudi opposition.

These contacts were not, contrary to the speculation of some Middle East experts, simply an effort to keep tabs on an enemy. The memo continues, summarizing Iraqi Intelligence activities:

> We are in the process of following up on the subject, to try and establish a nucleus of Saudi opposition in Iraq, and use our relationship with [al-Massari] to serve our intelligence goals.

The final document provided to THE WEEKLY STANDARD is a translation of a memo from the "Republican Command, Intelligence Division," dated September 15, 2001. It is addressed to "Mr. M.A.M.5."

> Our Afghani source number 11002 (his biographic information in attachment #1) has provided us information that the Afghani consul Ahmed Dahestani (his biographic information attachment #2) has talked in front of him about the following:
>
> 1. That Osama bin Laden and the Taliban group in Afghanistan are in communication with Iraq and that previously a group of Taliban and Osama bin Laden have visited Iraq.
> 2. That America has evidence that the Iraqi government and the group of Osama bin Laden have cooperated to attack targets inside America.
> 3. In the event that it has been proven that the group of Osama bin Laden and the Taliban planning such operations, it is possible that America will attack Iraq and Afghanistan.
> 4. That the Afghani consul heard of the relation between Iraq and the group of Osama bin Laden while he was in Iran.
> 5. In the light of what has been presented, we suggest to write to the committee of information.

This document is speculative in parts, and the information it contains is third-hand at best. Its value depends on the credibility of "source number 11002" and of Ahmed Dahestani and of the sources Dahestani relied on, all of which are unknown.

We are left, then, with three small pieces to add to a large and elaborate puzzle. We will never have a complete picture of the Iraqi regime's support for global terrorism, but the coming release of a flood of captured documents should get us closer.

A new and highly illuminating article in *Foreign Affairs* draws on hundreds of Iraqi documents to provide a look at the Iraq war from the Iraqi perspective. The picture that emerges is that of an Iraqi regime built on a foundation of paranoia and lies and eager to attack its perceived enemies, internal and external. This paragraph is notable:

> The Saddam Fedayeen also took part in the regime's domestic terrorism operations and planned for attacks throughout Europe and the Middle East. In a document dated May 1999, Saddam's older son, Uday, ordered preparations for "special operations, assassinations, and bombings, for the centers and traitor symbols in London, Iran and the self-ruled areas [Kurdistan]." Preparations for "Blessed July," a regime-directed wave of "martyrdom" operations against targets in the West, were well under way at the time of the coalition invasion.

Think about that last sentence. ◆

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Indentured Families

Social conservatives and the GOP: Can this marriage be saved?

By Allan Carlson

In the internal politics of the Republican coalition, some members are consistently more equal than others. In particular, where the interests of the proverbial "Sam's Club Republicans" collide with the interests of the great banks, the Sam's Club set might as well pile into the family car and go home.

Consider, to take one recent instance, the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act, enacted last year, after a long delay, with support from congressional Republicans. A controversial clause that would have prevented abortion protesters from filing for bankruptcy to avoid paying court-ordered fines had stalled the measure. After the Senate rejected this provision, GOP leaders drove the bill through both houses of Congress and gained an enthusiastic signature from President George W. Bush.

In a nutshell, the new law makes a "clean start" after filing for bankruptcy much more difficult for families with at least one wage earner. Instead, most affected households will find themselves essentially indentured to a bank or credit card bureau, paying off their debt for years to come. "A new form of feudalism," one critic calls it.

In truth, some had abused the old law, turning repeated bankruptcy filings into a kind of circus. A tightening on this side probably made sense. Significantly, though, the new law made no real changes on the lenders' side, measures that might have reined in an increasingly predatory credit industry. It is common knowledge, for example, that credit card companies intentionally urge financially troubled families to borrow still more money, because they can charge these households exorbitant interest rates. As one Citibank executive has candidly observed, "They are the ones who provide most of our profit." Late payment fees, another favored industry device, reportedly deliver over 30 percent of credit card financing revenue. Assurances by lawmakers that the new law will bring credit card interest rates down fly in the face of these more fundamental corporate strategies.

True, in the context of America's new debt-driven economy, this treatment of financially troubled families may constitute "good business" (even if under older ethical standards it's the equivalent of offering a barrel of whiskey to an alcoholic). More fundamentally, though, the GOP's opting for an outcome that's good for Citibank's profits while disregarding the effects on families should cause no surprise.

Some history may help here. The modern "family issues" are actually about a century old. The first openly "pro-family" president was a Republican, Theodore Roosevelt. Between 1900 and about 1912, he wrote and spoke often, and eloquently, about the dangers of a rising divorce rate and a falling birth rate. He celebrated motherhood and fatherhood as the most important human tasks, and described the true marriage as "a partnership of the soul, the spirit and the mind, no less than of the body." He blasted as "foes of our household" the birth control movement, equity feminism, eugenics, and liberal Christianity.

However, the Rough Rider was the only prominent Republican of his time to think and talk this way. The dominant wing of the GOP tilted in favor of the banks, the great industries, and—perhaps more surprisingly—the feminist movement. Indeed, as early as 1904, the National Association of Manufacturers had formed an alliance with the feminists, for they shared an interest in moving women out of their homes and into the paid labor market. When the feminists reorganized as the National Woman's party in 1917, the manufacturers' association apparently provided secret financial support. More openly, Republican leaders embraced the feminists' proposed Equal Rights Amendment, first advanced in Congress in 1923. The GOP was also the first major party to endorse the ERA in its platform.

Meanwhile, the Democrats consolidated their 19th-

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century legacy of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion": that is, as the party favoring beer halls, the new immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe, southern agrarians, northern Catholics, small property, the trade unions, and—importantly—the "family wage" for male workers. This cultural and legal device sought to deliver a single wage to fathers sufficient to support a wife and children at home. The Democrats also welcomed the "Maternalists" into their ranks, female activists who —while believing strongly in equal legal and political rights for women—also emphasized the natural differences between the sexes when it came to childbirth and child care. They favored federal programs for the training of girls in home economics and for "baby saving," meaning efforts to reduce infant and maternal mortality. They fiercely opposed working mothers and day care. Under this Maternalist influence, every New Deal domestic program openly assumed or quietly reinforced the goal of a "family wage" and the model American family of a breadwinning father, a homemaking mother, and an average of three or four children.

Late WPA poster, late 1930s

Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, WPA Poster Collection

In short, from 1912 until 1964, the Democrats were—on balance—the pro-family party. The Republicans, on balance, were the party of business interests and the feminists.

All this changed between 1964 and 1980 with the emergence of the "Reagan Democrats." This radical reorientation of American domestic politics began with debate about adding "sex" to the list of prohibited discriminations under Title VII (employment issues) of the proposed Civil Rights Act of 1964, a fascinating event that ended with the addition of "sex" and the ensuing legal destruction of the "family wage" regime. The broad transformation continued with the rise of the "pro-family movement" during the 1970s, behind early leaders such as Phyllis Schlafly and Paul Weyrich. It ended in 1980 with the solid movement of northern Catholics and southern evangelicals into the Republican party, and the counter-movement of feminists and the new sexual revolutionaries into the Democratic fold. Ronald Reagan, a proud four-time voter for Franklin D. Roosevelt and a lifelong admirer of the New Deal, explained his 1980 victory to a group of Catholic voters this way:

> The secret is that when the left took over the Democratic party we [former Democrats] took over the Republican party. We made the Republican party into the party of the working people, the family, the neighborhood, the defense of freedom. And yes, the American Flag and the Pledge of Allegiance to One Nation Under God. So, you see, the party that so many of us grew up with still exists except that today it's called the Republican party.

In fact, this was only partly true. For the Republican party as reshaped by Reagan now saw pro-family social conservatives in political alliance with the interests of the banks and the large corporations. Main Street and Wall Street were under the same tent, which was a very new development.

So, how well has the Republican party performed as the party of the traditional family? At the level of the party platform, it has done fairly well. Since 1980, pro-family activists have successfully shaped Republican platforms that oppose ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, endorse a constitutional amendment to overturn *Roe* v. *Wade* and protect preborn infant life, and call for pro-family tax measures.

And there have been concrete wins. Regarding taxation, for example, the Tax Reform Act of 1986 doubled the value of the child-friendly personal exemption and

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indexed it to inflation. Ten years later, another tax bill created a new Child Tax Credit. George Bush's 2001 tax cut raised this credit to $1,000 per child and began to eliminate the tax code's notorious marriage penalty.

There have been other gains. Congress approved and President Bush signed a ban on partial-birth abortion. The welfare reform of 1996 eliminated perverse incentives to out-of-wedlock births. Under the current President Bush, the Administration on Children, Youth, and Families and the Office of Population Affairs, important branches of the Department of Health and Human Services, are in pro-family hands. As of last month, so is the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration. Judges with pro-family records have won presidential appointment to federal courts, most recently Samuel Alito. Especially with the current administration, social conservatives have sometimes felt that they actually hold a true seat at the table.

Even so, all is not well within the existing Republican coalition. Indeed, there are other indicators that the Republican party has done relatively little to help traditional families, and may in fact be contributing to their new indentured status. Certainly at the level of net incomes, the one-earner family today is worse off than it was thirty years ago, when the GOP began to claim the pro-family banner. Specifically, the median income of married-couple families, with the wife not in the paid labor force, was $40,100 in 2002, less than it had been in 1970 ($40,785) when inflation is taken into account. In contrast, the real earnings of two-income married couple families rose by 35 percent over the same years (to nearly $73,000). Put another way, families have been able to get ahead only by becoming "nontraditional" and sending mother to work or forgoing children altogether. As the Maternalists had warned, eliminating America's "family wage" system would drive male wages down and severely handicap the one-income home. So it has happened.

Despite the economic pressures, though, such families are not extinct. They still form core social conservative constituencies such as home schooling families and families with four or more children. But again, they have little to show from the years of the Republican alliance. Indeed, the GOP has done absolutely nothing to curb the egalitarian frenzy and the gender-role engineering set off by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and enshrined at the Pentagon. Equity feminism still rules these roosts.

Or consider child care. A timely veto by Richard Nixon stopped the government's day care juggernaut in 1971, but only for a few months. The same year, Nixon signed a Republican-designed measure also backed by the National Organization for Women (heir to the GOP-favored National Woman's party). This law allowed families to deduct day care costs from their income tax, cleverly labeling them "business expenses." This has since grown into a credit worth between $1,500 and $2,100 in reduced taxes for households using day care. Even the wealthiest qualify.

Meanwhile, families that sacrifice a second income to keep a mother or father at home receive nothing except a higher net tax. Bills to correct this gross inequity have been regularly introduced in Congress since 1996, most recently the Parents' Tax Relief Act of 2006 (H.R. 3080). However, the Republican leadership has ignored them. To underscore the lost opportunity here, note that conservatives in Canada rode to victory just a few weeks ago by embracing a plan to extend that nation's day care benefit to stay-at-home parents; not a whiff of this, though, in the recent State of the Union address.

Add to these examples the bankruptcy reform measure discussed earlier, and ask: What do these issues have in common? All three are matters where the interests of big business and the interests of traditional, one-breadwinner families have collided, and in each case the Republican party has sided in the end with business. Concerning one-income families, the great corporations continue to view them as a waste of human resources, artificially raising labor costs by holding adults at home. Judging by its inaction and results, the GOP agrees. For the same reason, large businesses generally favor federally subsidized day care, for it creates incentives for mothers to work rather than care for their children. Existing Republican policy strongly favors this social parenting. And the credit industry has every interest in creating a new, indentured debtor class annually sending 20 percent of its income to the banks. The Republicans concur.

Other debt-driven family issues are looming, with little indication of a Republican willingness to tackle them in a pro-family way. Consider the Federal Student Loan program, launched in the mid-1960s as a modest supplement to means-tested federal education grants. The system has since morphed into a massive debt machine, lending out $58 billion in 2005 alone and fueling a huge increase in college and university costs. The average bachelor's degree recipient currently graduates with $20,000 in debt; students having attended graduate school report another $50,000 to $100,000 in debt, creating in one commentator's words

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"the most indebted generation of young Americans ever."

Here we find another newly indentured class of Americans, also paying about 20 percent of their incomes to the banks for decades to come. Disturbingly, over 20 percent of these borrowers report that they have delayed having children because of their debt, while 15 percent say they have delayed marriage. These are not pro-family outcomes. The most recent Republican response to the borrowers' plight—undertaken in early February in the name of fiscal responsibility—was to pass a measure whose net effect will be to raise the long-term debt facing young adults.

Another troubling new issue is Title IV-D of the Social Security Act, the federal government's child support collection and enforcement program. Originally designed to track down the welfare fathers of illegitimate children, the measure has increasingly targeted middle income households affected by divorce. There is mounting evidence that the system now encourages marital breakup and exacerbates fatherlessness by creating a winner-take-all game, where the losing parent—commonly a father wanting to save the marriage—is unfairly penalized by the loss of his children and by a federally enforced child support obligation. Here we find objectively false feminist views—the assumption that men are always the abusers and women are always the victims—driving public policy. And here we find still another newly indentured class of citizens—non-custodial parents—being squeezed financially by the state. If you think this an exaggeration, I refer you to no less an authority than Phyllis Schlafly, who calls this runaway federal law the most serious danger facing American families today.

Democrats often dream of wooing the "Reagan Democrats" back into the fold. Bill Clinton, who could speak "evangelical" and who embraced pro-family tax and welfare reforms, succeeded to some degree. Democratic strategist Stanley Greenberg, who actually coined the phrase "Reagan Democrats," argues that "a new, family-centered politics can define and revitalize the Democratic party." Its message should highlight "family integrity and parental responsibility" and offer a "progressive vision of family support." Greenberg even theorizes that "Roman Catholics would [again] rally to a Democratic party respectful of family and committed to defending government's unique role in supporting it."

If the Democratic party remains the party of the sexual revolution, as its open yearning for same-sex marriage suggests it may, such dreams will remain just that. However, if a Democratic leader can ever shake that monkey off his—or her—back, and if this occurs in conjunction with an economic downturn, the prospects for another broad political realignment are fairly high. A new economic populism, delivering child-sensitive benefits and skewering predatory banks and bureaucrats, could work politically for a clever Democrat.

Moreover, when push comes to shove, social conservatives remain second class citizens under the Republican tent. During the 2004 Republican convention, they were virtually confined to the party's attic, kept off the main stage, treated like slightly lunatic children. Republican lobbyist Michael Scanlon's infamous candid comment—"The wackos get their information [from] the Christian right [and] Christian radio"—suggests a common opinion among the dominant "K Street" Republicans toward their coalition allies.

Contemporary Republican leaders need to do better—much better—toward social conservatives. They must creatively address pressing new family issues centered on debt burden. And they must learn to say "no" sometimes to Wall Street, lest they squander the revolutionary political legacy of Ronald Reagan. ♦

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Droit du Sénateur

Senatorial privilege vs. quality judges

By Edward Whelan

President Bush recently nominated Milan D. Smith Jr. to fill a longstanding vacancy on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. The Ninth Circuit, which covers nine western states, is a notorious bastion of liberal judicial lawlessness. So the White House should be looking to fill the vacancy with an outstanding jurist who is learned in questions of federal constitutional and statutory law and who is prepared to dedicate two decades or more to the arduous task of helping to transform that court.

Unfortunately, Smith hardly fits the bill. A Los Angeles-area attorney, Smith, 64, has specialized for nearly four decades in real estate transactions—a specialty that has little bearing on the questions that occupy federal courts. In his one term as a member of a state antidiscrimination commission, he "distinguished himself" by "his time-management skills," says one of his supporters. He recently explained his decision to step down from the commission by implying disdain for his fellow party members: "I'm a Republican, but I'm a Republican with a heart."

Consider also David L. Bunning, whom President Bush nominated to a federal district judgeship in 2001. Thirty-five years old when he was nominated, Bunning had been a lawyer for only ten years. Citing his "very limited and shallow" experience with civil cases, his not "particularly challenging" criminal caseload as a federal prosecutor, his unimpressive writing, and his middling academic record, the ABA rated Bunning "not qualified" for a judgeship. Whether or not one credits the ABA rating—a minority of the committee did find Bunning "qualified"—it would be difficult to argue that Bunning was prime judgeship material. But the Senate, with a Democratic majority intent on blocking many of the president's judicial nominees, expeditiously and unanimously confirmed Bunning.

Smith and Bunning might buck the odds and prove to be outstanding judges, and I certainly don't mean to suggest there is anything exceptional about their questionable qualifications. On the contrary, unpromising judicial picks have been all too common among President Bush's lower-court nominees. But what the low caliber of these nominees helps demonstrate is the extraordinary and regrettable influence senators exercise over federal judgeships in their home states. For the key facts driving Smith's candidacy are that Barbara Boxer, the ultraliberal senator from California, recommended his nomination and that Smith is the brother of Oregon's Republican senator Gordon Smith. His brother and Boxer, Milan Smith says, "are very good friends." As for Bunning, the district judgeship that he now occupies is in Kentucky, the home state of Republican senator Jim Bunning, who, not coincidentally, is his father.

For all the attention given to the Democratic filibuster of judicial nominees in recent years, the greater impediment to President Bush's ability to appoint high-quality practitioners of judicial restraint to the federal district and appellate courts comes from obscure Senate practices that enjoy widespread bipartisan support from senators. These practices exist because they serve the narrow interests of individual senators. They are, in short, perquisites of membership in the club known as the United States Senate.

After his remarkable successes in winning the confirmations of Chief Justice John Roberts and Justice Samuel Alito, President Bush must return to the less glamorous work of filling vacancies on the lower courts. This work is more difficult not only because of the large number of open seats but because of the great influence that home-state senators believe themselves entitled to exert over lower-court nominations.

This influence can manifest itself in two ways: first, through the Senate Judiciary Committee's blue-slip

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policy, which serves primarily as a tool of senators in the party opposite the president's; and second, through the entrenched attitude of same-party senators that they have a virtual right to designate judicial nominees in their states.

Let's begin with the blue-slip policy, which is generally thought to have arisen as an informal Senate Judiciary Committee practice some 50 years ago. The "blue slip" refers to the piece of paper that the chairman of the committee sends to a senator informing him that the president has made a nomination to a position in his home state and inviting him to object or offer support. A senator who objects can express his objection on the blue slip (a "negative blue slip").

The substance of the blue-slip policy, both historically and as it applies today, is murky and disputed. The policy's contours depend primarily on four factors. First, which grounds may a senator legitimately rely on to object to a home-state nomination? May he rely simply on personal grounds, such as the fact that the nominee is the sister of his next general-election opponent? Or may he also rely on broader political or ideological differences with the nominee?

Second, what effect will the committee chairman afford a negative blue slip? Will it suffice to kill a nomination? Or will it merely be given the indeterminate promise of "substantial weight"? Does it matter whether the other home-state senator has also submitted a negative blue slip?

Third, to which judicial nominations will the blue-slip policy apply? Only to those for district judges, whose caseloads clearly relate to the home state in which the judge will sit? Or also to those for appellate judges, even though appellate judges from different states in the same circuit take part equally in the cases arising from the district courts across those various states?

Fourth, and oddly neglected, is whether the Senate majority (and thus the committee chairman) is of the same party as the president. If the Senate majority is of the same party as the president, then a negative blue slip by a minority senator operates to obstruct (to the extent of the effect accorded the blue slip) the presumed common will of the president and the Senate majority. By contrast, if the Senate majority is of the party opposing the president, then the obstructing effect of a negative blue slip by a majority senator is more readily justifiable as an exercise of power delegated to that senator by his colleagues in the majority.

How these factors interact determines how sensible any particular blue-slip policy is. If, for example, blue slips were to apply only to district-court nominees and senators were to return negative blue slips only when they had genuine personal grounds for objecting to the nominee, a committee chairman could reasonably give those negative blue slips nomination-killing effect, even where the negative blue slip came from a minority senator. After all, it should not be a difficult matter for the president to find an equally qualified nominee who does not arouse the senator's personal opposition. Conversely, where a negative blue slip can be returned for purely ideological reasons, it would seem defensible for a committee chairman to give decisive effect to that negative blue slip when it is submitted by a member of his own party, but it would seem suicidal—or, more precisely, remarkably detrimental to the interests of his own party—to do so when it is submitted by a member of the minority party.

Curiously enough, there are some individuals deeply involved in the current confirmation process who believe that this absurd policy is precisely what Arlen Specter, the committee's chairman for the past year, has adopted, both for district-court and appellate-court nominees. This belief explains why it would be helpful to Milan Smith, rather than damning, that Barbara Boxer welcomes his nomination.

Orrin Hatch, Specter's predecessor as chairman, stated clearly in 2003 that he would abide by the same blue-slip policy that Teddy Kennedy and Joe Biden had adopted when they each chaired the committee. Under what Hatch labeled the "Kennedy-Biden-Hatch blue-slip policy," the return of a negative blue slip on a nomination would be given "substantial weight," but a committee hearing and vote on the nomination would proceed. Specter has issued no such statement, and he has not yet held a hearing on any nominee with negative or unreturned blue slips.

When Hatch spelled out his blue-slip policy in 2003, the left attacked him for departing from the nomination-killing policy that he had supposedly applied as chairman in the late 1990s to nominees of President Clinton. What this attack ignored, of course, is that the situation in the late 1990s, when the president was of a different party from the Senate majority, was manifestly different from the situation today, when the president and the Senate majority are of the same party. Especially when it is acceptable to return a negative blue slip on ideological grounds, it is elementary common sense, not hypocrisy, for a committee chairman to distinguish between granting his own majority colleagues the power to block a nominee of a president of the opposite party, on the one hand, and granting a member of the minority the ability to block a nominee of a president who is of the same party as the committee chairman.

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This common sense is also supported by precedent. Since the beginning of the Nixon administration 37 years ago, there have been only two brief periods in which the president and the committee chairman were both Democrats: 1977 to 1981, with President Carter and Chairman Kennedy, and 1993 to 1994, with President Clinton and Chairman Biden (and when I was a Senate Judiciary Committee staffer). As Hatch made clear, Kennedy and Biden adopted the same policy that Hatch adopted in 2003. In particular, it was after Carter became president that Kennedy diluted the blue-slip policy that had applied to Nixon and Ford nominees, so that a negative blue slip would be accorded only "substantial weight."

A feudal lord's supposed right—the *droit du seigneur*—to usurp a vassal's marital privileges with his bride on their wedding night is apocryphal. But what might be called the *droit du sénateur*—a senator's asserted right to direct the president in his constitutional authority to name judges in the senator's home state—is very real.

The Constitution provides that the president "shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint" federal judges. The syntax of this provision makes clear that the power to nominate lies exclusively with the president and that the constitutional role of the Senate comes into play after the president makes a nomination. As Alexander Hamilton stated in *Federalist* 66: "It will be the office of the President to *nominate*, and, with the advice and consent of the Senate, to *appoint*. There will, of course, be no exertion of *choice* on the part of the Senate. They may defeat one choice of the Executive, and oblige him to make another; but they cannot themselves *choose*—they can only ratify or reject the choice he may have made."

But the practical reality has long been very different. Senators of the same party as the president regularly claim the right to select district-court nominees in their states, and presidents, including President Bush, largely acquiesce in these claims. Presidents are free to engage in whatever prenomination consultation they find expedient, and I am certainly not contending that the role that senators have seized is unconstitutional. But, as Hamilton explained in *Federalist* 76, senators' involvement in the choice of nominees multiplies the prospect that "personal considerations" will be given undue weight at the expense of qualifications. As the Bunning nomination exemplifies, senators have undermined the advantages in quality that Hamilton recognized should flow from having "sole and undivided responsibility" for nominations vested in the president.

Indeed, a senator selecting judicial nominees will naturally be inclined to regard the occasion as one more opportunity to dispense patronage to supporters. Presidents, of course, are hardly immune from the same temptation. But, Hamilton argues, a president will have a "livelier sense of duty and a more exact regard to reputation." This would seem to be especially true of a president, like Bush, who has clearly stated his commitment to a jurisprudential philosophy of judicial restraint and who has staffed his ranks of nominations-vetters with excellent lawyers who share that commitment. Thus, there should be no doubt that exercise of the *droit du sénateur* generally operates to degrade the quality of President Bush's district court nominees.

Fortunately, the degree to which senators actually exercise this perceived right varies considerably, and there are numerous district court nominees who have been of high caliber. But this right also threatens to expand, as senators aim to increase their influence on the selection of appellate court nominees whose chambers would be in their states.

Even senators of the party opposite the president's have gotten in on the act. In 2001, when Democrats controlled the Senate, California senators Boxer and Dianne Feinstein set up a commission to screen candidates for district judgeships and succeeded in coercing President Bush to select his nominees from the candidates approved by the commission. Despite the Republican takeover of the Senate in 2002 and further Republican gains in 2004, the role of that commission remains unchanged, and every nominee of President Bush to a district judgeship in California has been preapproved by the commission.

How adverse is the Senate's effect on the quality of judicial nominees? As it happens, the D.C. Circuit, which is immune from any home-state senator influence, provides a sort of control group against which judges from other courts of appeals can be compared. Although only three courts of appeals have fewer seats, the D.C. Circuit over the past 25 years has featured a slew of outstanding conservative jurists—most prominently Antonin Scalia, Robert Bork, Clarence Thomas, and John Roberts, but also many lesser-known stars, such as (to name just a couple) Laurence Silberman and Douglas Ginsburg. No other court of appeals comes close to matching this roster.

It might be thought that the D.C. Circuit's reputation for producing Supreme Court nominees makes it especially attractive to stellar candidates. But I think it more likely that the D.C. Circuit has produced so many

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Supreme Court nominees because the absence of home-state senator interference makes it easier for strong candidates to be nominated and confirmed. Judge Janice Rogers Brown provides a telling case in point. Brown was a California supreme court justice when President Bush nominated her to the D.C. Circuit in 2003. The White House fully understood that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to confirm her to the Ninth Circuit. Indeed, senators Boxer and Feinstein killed the earlier nomination of Carolyn Kuhl to a Ninth Circuit seat. Although Democrats put up a major fight, Brown was confirmed to the D.C. Circuit last year.

Consider also Brett Kavanaugh, President Bush's currently pending—and superbly qualified—nominee to the D.C. Circuit. Kavanaugh is a native of Maryland, and a seat on the Fourth Circuit that Maryland's Democratic senators regard as a "Maryland seat" has been vacant for more than five years. But these senators forced President Bush to abandon his original outstanding candidate for that slot (Maryland resident Peter Keisler) and would likewise have fought tooth-and-nail against Kavanaugh as a Fourth Circuit nominee. By contrast, Kavanaugh should be confirmed to the D.C. Circuit soon (though it shouldn't be overlooked that his nomination has already been pending for more than two-and-a-half years).

The clout of senators operates perversely to ensure that, broadly speaking, weaker nominees are confirmed faster than stronger ones.

There are, of course, other explanations for the quality of D.C. Circuit judges. In particular, every president undoubtedly pays special attention to D.C. Circuit nominations because that court, with its heavy administrative-law caseload, plays a major role in reviewing actions of the executive branch. But it seems clear that the much-reduced senatorial influence—resulting from the inapplicability of the blue-slip policy and the absence of any home-state senator pushing for his brother-in-law to be nominated—also contributes significantly to quality.

The ill effects of senatorial influence extend beyond reducing the quality of nominees. The clout of senators also operates perversely to ensure that, broadly speaking, weaker nominees are confirmed faster than stronger ones. Assume two nominees, one who has *de facto* been selected by a senator (and who therefore is more likely to have been selected because of his ties to the senator than because of his qualifications) and the other who is a genuine high-quality presidential pick. In an exercise of reciprocal back-scratching, the senator's colleagues will likely put his pick on the faster track.

Indeed, Senate Democrats like to deflect criticism of their unprecedented filibusters of lower-court nominees by citing statistics showing how many of the president's nominees have been confirmed. What these statistics obscure is that the Senate has disproportionately confirmed the nominees whom senators understand to be essentially senatorial selections. For very good reasons, not all nominees are of equal import in the eyes of the White House. Yet senatorial selections provide Democrats cover to use other procedural mechanisms—such as the anonymous "hold" or the withholding of unanimous consent—to stall or block the most important nominees.

Politics is politics, and I have no illusion that the successful career politicians who occupy Senate seats can be induced to abandon the self-serving practices that enhance their power and help advance their reelection. But there are some minimal steps that certain senators should take.

First, Chairman Specter should make clear that Barbara Boxer and company do not have the unprecedented power to veto President Bush's judicial nominees. Specifically, he should expressly adopt the same blue-slip policy that former chairmen Kennedy, Biden, and Hatch applied when each was dealing with a president of his own party: The return of a negative blue slip, while accorded "substantial weight," will not impede the committee from proceeding to a hearing and a vote on the nomination.

Second, Republican senators, while continuing to exert extraordinary influence on the selection of district-court nominees, should yield full nominating power to President Bush on appellate-court nominees. The work of a court of appeals judge has no particular connection to a single state, and there is no principled basis for a home-state senator to use the incidental fact of the presumed location of a vacancy to invoke any influence over the nomination to fill that vacancy. Republican senators should agree that any views they offer on appellate-court nominations are purely advisory.

Third, Specter and Majority Leader Bill Frist should press to make sure that longstanding nominees receive committee votes and final Senate action. It is, on balance, good that the David Bunnings and Milan Smiths, once nominated, proceed to confirmation. But their success should not come at the expense of nominees like Terry Boyle (nominated to the Fourth Circuit in May 2001) and Brett Kavanaugh. ♦

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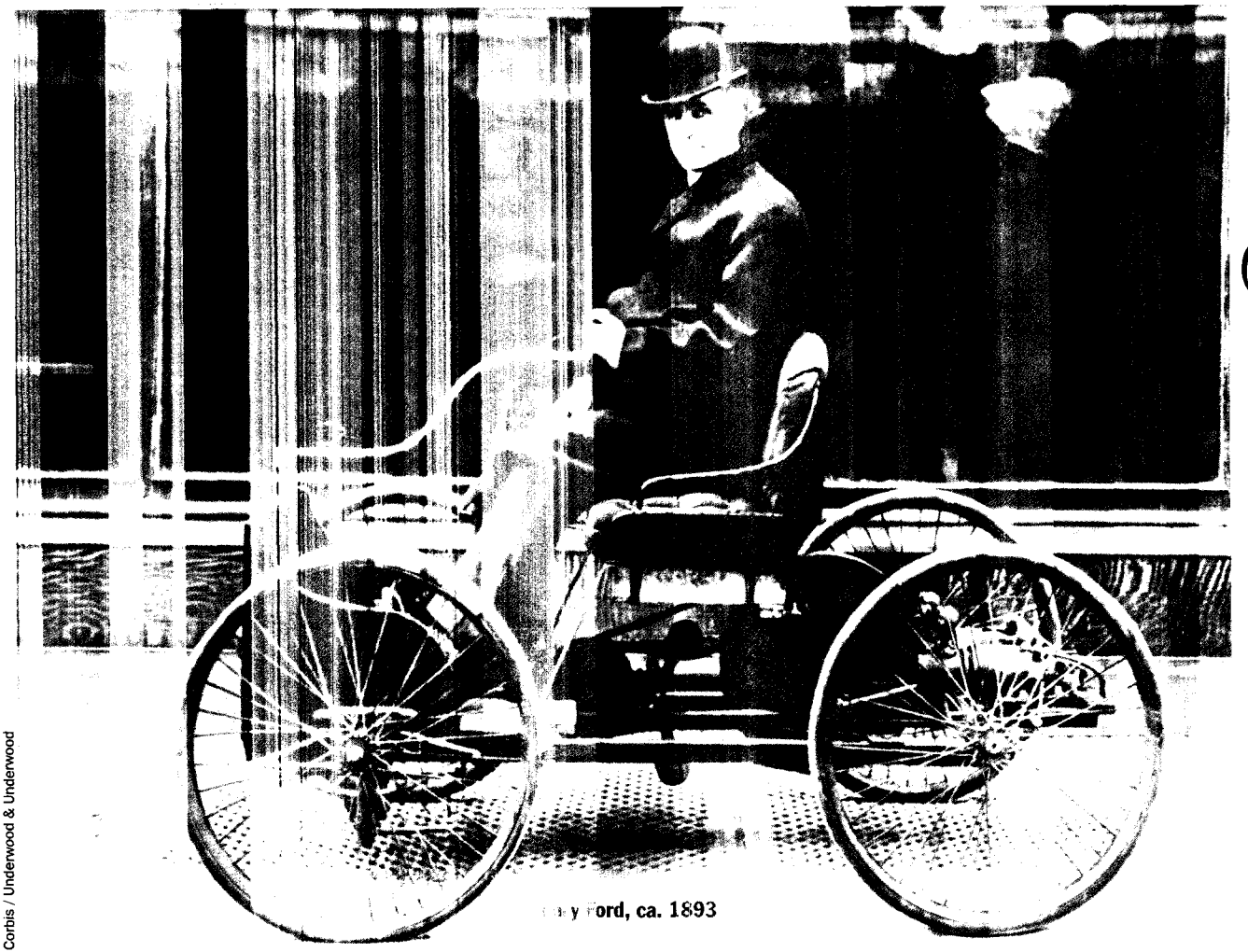

Henry Ford, ca. 1893

Corbis / Underwood & Underwood

The Auto Didact

Inventing Henry Ford's America By Stephanie Deutsch

Henry Ford famously dismissed history as "bunk" (in one interview he called it "bunk, bunk—double bunk"), but history has been more appreciative of him.

The man whose name is synonymous with the American automobile is credited with profoundly changing the country by making cars available to the masses and is seen as a pioneer in the development of modern industry. *Fortune* has called him the "businessman of the century," while a poll of academic experts has named him the greatest of American entrepreneurs, ahead of John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and Bill Gates. Now a new study of Ford's life and career makes an even stronger case for his significance. Steven Watts, professor of history at the University of Missouri-Columbia, sees Henry Ford as the man who, "perhaps more than any other person . . . created the American Century."

The People's Tycoon
Henry Ford and the American Century
by Steven Watts
Knopf, 640 pp., $30

In the obviously seminal impact of the automobile on the American lifestyle, landscape, and psyche, it's easy to appreciate Ford's significance. But Watts sees Ford as more than an automaker; he sees him as a man who, to an uncanny extent, both reflected the times in which he lived and helped shape them. In the many contradictions and inconsistencies in Ford's thought and behavior—hailed as a progressive and reformer, he was also a notorious anti-Semite and union-basher—Watts sees a reflection of the deep dislocation wrought during the years of Ford's long life by the nation's transformation from Victorian, self-reliant, and rural to industrial, urban, consumerist, and modern.

Born a few weeks after the battle of Gettysburg, Ford spent his childhood in Greenfield Township, a small farming community near Dearborn, Michigan. His father, William Ford, had fled the Irish potato famine to join members of his extended family there,

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Henry Ford, 1941

Getty Images / Hulton Archive

and by the time Henry, his first child, was born, he was a prospering farmer and respected member of the community. Henry grew up playing with five siblings, helping his father with farm chores, being taught at home by his very efficient mother, and then trooping off to a one-room schoolhouse. There he did particularly well in oral arithmetic and excelled also as a prankster and tinkerer; he once built a crude turbine steam engine that exploded, setting the school fence on fire and leaving Ford with a lifelong scar on his cheek. At Christmas time his siblings used to hide their toys from their elder brother because they feared, as his sister Margaret remembered, "He just takes them apart."

When Ford was 13, his much-loved mother died unexpectedly, and a period of rebellion and discontent began for him. Never an enthusiast for physical labor, Ford didn't care for farming, but he was fascinated by all kinds of tools and machines. So, at 16, he left Dearborn for Detroit and an apprenticeship with a friend of his father's who had a small machine shop. Each year he would return to his family farm for several weeks to help with the harvest.

There a critical event took place when a neighbor asked Henry's help with a portable steam engine he planned to hire out to other farmers for use with threshing machines and saws. Henry made the thing work, and, as he later wrote, "getting a grip on the engine, so to speak, I got a grip on myself." It wasn't long before he was building his own "farm locomotive," or primitive tractor. He also got a job with Westinghouse traveling from farm to farm repairing machines of all kinds. During the winter he studied mechanical drawing, bookkeeping, and business practices at a Detroit school. In 1888, he married Clara Jane Bryant, the petite but strong-minded woman who would be his wife for 59 years, and settled down with her on a farm given to him by his father.

But Henry disliked farm life. In 1891, the young couple moved to Detroit and Ford started working for Edison Illuminating, where he would spend most of the next decade, learning more about electrical engineering and impressing his colleagues with his ingenuity and instinctive grasp of all things mechanical. Before long he was chief engineer, with a flexible schedule that gave him time for his real passion: experimenting with the creation of an internal combustion engine that might power a "horseless carriage."

Early on the morning of June 4, 1896, Ford took the "Quadricycle" he had created with a few assistants out for a ride—but only after taking an axe to his workshed doorway, that, he hadn't realized, was too small for the vehicle to pass through. Later that summer, he attended a professional convention in New York, where he met Thomas Edison, who was impressed with his description of the engine he was creating and, according to Ford's recollection, told him, "Young man, that's the thing; you have it. Keep at it!" A year later Ford had created a second prototype car that was dependable enough to drive out to the family farm in Dearborn, where he enjoyed explaining the mechanical details to his younger brothers and, according to one of them, "scaring the life out of his sisters."

Ford's early efforts to form a company to manufacture automobiles were failures, at least in part because of his insistence on totally controlling every endeavor he was part of. Also, Ford was distracted from the manufacturing side of the automobile business because he had become obsessed with competitive racing. In 1901, in a highly publicized event near Detroit, he raced Alexander Winton, the holder of the world record for a mile (a minute and 14 seconds). Ford won, in his wife's words, "covering himself with glory and dust" and garnering favorable publicity with this and other racing victories that helped him find partners and financial backing. In June 1903, the Ford Motor Company was incorporated with support from a small group of investors who put up $28,000 in cash. A year later, with Ford organizing the manufacturing process while James Couzens handled the finances, the company's first car, the Model A, was selling well.

Five years later, Ford realized his dream of creating a "universal car," one that the average American could afford. The Model T, which debuted in the fall of 1908, was lightweight, fairly reliable, and inexpensive (initially the price was $850; it fell in later years). It immediately revolutionized the car industry in America and, indeed, the world. An automobile was no longer a luxury but a staple of the new age, and Model Ts were sold as fast as they could be produced. Ford created a massive new factory in the Detroit suburb of Highland Park and, in 1913, introduced there a new manufacturing technique called the assembly line. In

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the first year of its operation, the assembly line produced 189,000 cars, 20 times as many as the year before; by 1916, the number was half a million.

With the Model T and the assembly line, Ford achieved not only tremendous personal wealth but also an unprecedented level of fame and popularity. He was widely interviewed, projecting an image of unpretentious folksiness. He always stressed his rural roots, his simple lifestyle, his disdain for elitism. And when, in early 1914, the Ford Motor Company made the stunning announcement that it was establishing new policies—reducing the workday at Highland Park from nine hours to eight, adding a third work shift, and doubling the pay for most workers by establishing a basic pay rate of $5 per day—Ford became even more popular.

He was hailed as a progressive reformer, an enlightened industrialist. He became, perhaps, the most widely admired man in America, his handsome, tall figure instantly recognizable. His popularity was scarcely dented by his embarrassing performance on the witness stand in the lawsuit he instigated in 1919 against the *Chicago Tribune* after it characterized him as "an ignorant idealist . . . and an anarchistic enemy of the nation" because of his vocal opposition to the use of the National Guard to patrol the border with Mexico. Proving him ignorant turned out to be, as Watts writes, "easier than anyone had ever imagined." Ford dated the American Revolution at 1812, and admitted that he rarely read anything more than newspaper headlines.

Yet the American public, for the most part, forgave him; he received tens of thousands of letters of support from all over the country. A master of publicity, Ford relished this popularity, ensuring that everything he did and said was widely reported in the press, from his tightly choreographed annual camping trips with Edison (who had become a close friend), tiremaker Harvey Firestone, and naturalist John Burroughs (the Four Vagabonds, they called themselves) to his frequent pronouncements on the evils of war, gambling, drink, and tobacco. He played with the idea of running for president—although his wife put an end to that, announcing publicly, "The day he runs for President of the United States, I will be on the next boat to England." When, in 1918, he acquired the *Dearborn Independent*, a local newspaper, Ford added a weekly column to his ways of communicating with the public.

The campaign denouncing perceived Jewish influence over everything from American music and baseball to the world banking system that Ford waged in the pages of his newspaper was emblematic of his fractious later years. During the second half of his life, Ford's opinionated self-confidence hardened into bigotry and egomania. For ten years, he railed against the Jews, and only stopped after a libel suit. He settled out of court, and issued a statement that "articles reflecting upon the Jews" would never appear in his paper again (although he was willing, in 1938, to accept the honorary Order of the Grand Cross of the German Eagle from the Hitler government).

Meanwhile, despite its preeminence in the field, the Ford Motor Company was almost destroyed several times because of Henry Ford's obsessive control, combined with decreasing direct involvement as the years went by. He resisted the notion that it was time to replace or update the Model T: Once, with his hands and the heel of a shoe, he broke to bits a prototype new model his staff had created as a surprise for him. He promoted his only child, his son Edsel, who was widely liked and admired, to a position of leadership within the company, and then froze him out of important decisions and consistently humiliated him by undercutting his leadership. Ford adopted an intransigent opposition to unions that led to the "Battle of the Overpass" in 1937, when Ford security men beat up the president and chief organizer of the United Auto Workers Union at the River Rouge plant, where they had come to pass out literature. According to Watts, Ford agreed to allow unions into his plants only after his wife threatened to leave him if he didn't.

In the 1940s, his mental powers declined, especially after Edsel's death from stomach ulcers at the age of 49. Henry Ford died in 1947, after a stroke.

In many of Ford's actions and ideas, Watts finds an enthusiastic embrace of the modernism that he himself was at the forefront of creating, constrained by a genuine but often simplistic clinging to the values of the previous age. A man of intelligence but little education (he admitted that he didn't like to read books because "they muss up my mind"), Ford based his ideas on his traditional upbringing and on hunches. He liked to emphasize his identification with ordinary people, his belief in the value of hard work, the joy of self-sufficiency and of individual responsibility.

Ford's initial interest in employee welfare grew out of a genuine desire to share the extraordinary wealth he was generating, and also a recognition of the demoralizing nature of modern factory work. (Although Watts sees the actual creation of the company's dramatic policy changes as largely the work of James Couzens.) Higher wages, Ford reasoned, would make workers more content, and would also serve the company by enabling them to afford the automobiles they were creating. Ford became a cheerleader for the new consumer society of which the car was an essential part: At his insistence, a proposed advertising slogan "Buy a Ford and Save the Difference!" became "Buy a Ford and Spend the Difference!" Society as a whole, he said, benefited by "circulation, not congestion." The traditional value of thrift was eased aside by the needs of the new age.

Personally, too, Ford became caught up in fads and new ideas that encouraged consuming, spending, and self-fulfillment. While publicly pledging to read a chapter of the Bible every day, and supporting a move to "get the Bible back into the public schools," Ford rarely attended church and increasingly turned for inspiration to unorthodox spirituality (he believed in reincarnation) and the ideas of the

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New Thought movement personified by Norman Vincent Peale. This meant being a "positive thinker" and abandoning the habits of an economy of scarcity for the more self-indulgent response to the new culture of abundance. He put great emphasis on mental energy, on visualization, on healthy (and occasionally odd) dietary choices, on physical exercise.

His public image of strict self-control and decorum was not quite the whole story of his private life. Evangeline Coté was a charming French Canadian 30 years his junior who Ford met when she came to work as a company stenographer. She combined coquetry with a lively personality (she was the first woman in Michigan to earn a pilot's license), and she captivated Ford. He engineered her marriage to his chauffeur, Ray Dahlinger, and provided a house and, later, 150 acres of land for the couple not far from his own home. Ford visited every day, showered attention and gifts on Evangeline, and, according to Watts, "evidence suggests" that the son she bore in 1923 was Ford's. He provided his own baby crib for the child to sleep in, and when the boy was seven, he received a racing car from the Indianapolis 500, courtesy of "Mr. Ford." To Watts, this lengthy, unconventional relationship was indicative of Ford's "instinct for cultural innovation." While projecting an image of traditional morality, Ford, too, was "reveling in a culture of mental and physical abundance."

By the time of the Wall Street crash, however, Ford was sounding more like a reactionary, railing against the dangers of "the promise of quick profits in speculation." He had long argued against the habit of buying on credit. Not really understanding them, he consistently downplayed the problems of the Depression, which he said could be solved by increased production from industry and a renewed commitment by individuals to hard work. He believed the New Deal was a violation of the fundamental American values of self-sufficiency and responsibility and, alone among automakers, refused to participate in the National Industrial Recovery Act, with its assertion of workers' right to organize, thereby triggering a government boycott of Ford products.

He developed an intense personal antipathy to Franklin Roosevelt, and described government and finance as two "parasites" determined to "suck the lifeblood" out of the American economy. Towards the end of his life Ford complained that "we have fallen into a philosophy of bigness which is not good for the American way of life." He even acknowledged that "in the race to see how fast and how cheaply we could produce . . . we seem to have overlooked the human side of the picture." He tried to promote a program of smaller factories throughout America so that people could divide their time between industry and agriculture.

Nowhere was Ford's ambivalence about modernism more evident than in his attitude towards history itself. The man who described as "bunk" the effort to teach history through a recounting of key events of the past was a passionate collector of historic artifacts. He started with McGuffey Readers, the books that taught reading through bright pictures and texts conveying strong moral precepts that had been used in American schools since the 1830s, and from which he himself had learned to read. By the 1920s he had amassed "probably the largest private collection of McGuffeys in the entire United States." Later in the decade he paid to have the readers reprinted and distributed in American schools. His collecting mania then moved to farm machinery and all the artifacts of small town life in 19th-century America. At the Henry Ford Museum and Greenfield Village in Dearborn he created a 252-acre park that displayed thousands of items in re-creations of his boyhood home and a village full of other buildings: The birthplace of William Holmes McGuffey, a courthouse where Lincoln had argued, the Wright brothers' bicycle shop, a village drugstore.

Ford viewed the museum as an educational gift to the American people, and while scholars criticized its lack of "intellectual coherence," the public loved it. As Ford grew older, he neglected his gigantic automobile works in favor of Greenfield Village, where he started a model school and also held regular dances to which Ford employees were invited (and which many of them felt compelled to attend). Ford and his wife loved traditional waltzes, reels, and square dances, finding them "clean and healthful," more social than sensual, reminders of an idealized American past. Watts notes that Ford's view of history, muddled as it was, was surprisingly modern: "History is being rewritten every year from a new point of view," he declared, "so how can anybody claim to know the truth about history?" He had adopted a modern, even a post-modern, understanding of history, as Watts writes, "not as the empirical recovery of absolute truth but as *interpretations* of the past." To Ford, real history was how people lived, the tools they used to help them in their work and play.

As he collected books reflecting the values of a bygone era, and tools from a rapidly vanishing rural America, an America he himself had fled, Ford was, in Watts's view, struggling with "an underlying uneasiness with the industrial world that he had created." The people who flocked to Greenfield Village, many of whom worked in Ford factories and dealerships and drove there in their Ford motorcars, shared this anxiety. The past as presented by the Ford Museum was dependable and safe, a comforting memory in a world of rapid cultural and physical change. Ford's own understanding of the world around him was limited by his meager education, by his "overweening hubris," by the very success that defined him.

"Like *Citizen Kane*," Watts writes, "Ford became a victim of his own powerful personality." Many of his ideas, and not a few of his actions, are confused, repellent, contradictory. And yet, as this long, occasionally repetitive, but always fascinating study makes clear, Ford's creativity and energy were very much at the heart of the American Century. ♦

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Stately McMansions

From the Hamptons, a comedy of manors.

BY STEFAN KANFER

The comic novelist Peter De Vries was celebrated for snippets of memorable dialogue. One of my favorites occurred during an exchange between a New Englander and a Southerner:

> "How do you know?"
> "Because Tom said so."
> "Tom who?"
> "Tom Magazine."

Given the current trivialization of said publication, that gag would no longer work. But there was a time when it did. I know; I was there, editing the book review section of *Tom* when wit and information were not unknown in its pages. During that fondly remembered period, the drollest and most instructive of the bygone staffers was a chap named Roger Rosenblatt. He won numerous awards for his work. From time to time I always wondered what had happened to him.

Roger Rosenblatt

Harper Collins / Nigel Parry

Lapham Rising
by Roger Rosenblatt
Ecco, 256 pp., $23.95

Imagine my surprise when I learned that, after Rosenblatt left the magazine, he became the editor of *US News and World Report*, a publication I never read; that subsequently he contributed, and still contributes, discerning essays to *The Jim Lehrer News Hour*, a program I never watch; and that he heads a writing department at Stony Brook University, an institution from which I did not graduate. In his spare time he seems to have published 11 books, starred in an autobiographical one-man off-Broadway show, written another play that featured Ron Silver, and recently composed the off-Broadway hit, *Ashley Montana Goes Ashore in the Caicos*, with Bebe Neuwirth as its centerpiece.

Having learned all this, I was bothered by two facts: (a) This protean figure had not developed a plan for world peace. (b) He had not written a novel. Evidently these have been gnawing at him, too. I am not privy to his global plans, but I note that *Lapham Rising*, Rosenblatt's debut on the fiction list, has just been published.

Its narrator, a blocked, curmudgeonly writer named Harry March, lives alone on an island within an island—Long Island, N.Y., to be precise. His wife has left him. His children have flown the nest. Harry's sole companion is a West Highland white terrier named Hector, whom he addresses as Mr. Tail.

Hector is an unusual canine. He not only talks back to Harry, he's also a born-again evangelical as well as a believer in free-market capitalism. Hence he cheers on Lapham, builder of an ostentatious home rising just across the way. Harry hates Lapham's parvenu plans. Then again, Harry hates everything. And everybody.

"Who but a misanthrope would live like this?" Mr. Tail demands. Stung, his master responds, "What's wrong with the way I live?"

> "What's wrong? Where to begin? How many people watch *Murder She Wrote* reruns all day long . . . ? And your appearance! Everything you wear is ten years old."

> "Not the bandage on my ear. And what about your appearance?"

> "I'm perfect," he says. "I take care of myself." He curls up and licks his genitals, thinking that proves the case.

Lapham Rising brims with word play: March's place is called Noman, so that when people ask where he lives he can reply, "Noman is an island." The Hispanic workers across the way refer to him as Señor Moment. Hector wonders why one can't serve both God and mammal.

But a mordant undercurrent runs beneath the chatter. No one has a better ear for the Hamptons' *hautes clichés* than Rosenblatt. As a beautiful neighbor dives into Long Island Sound, for example, Harry remarks that a hush seems to fall over the posh suburbs:

> No one asks where the potato farms have gone. Likewise the duck farms. No Filipino housekeeper is yelled at for failing to position the fruit forks correctly. No year-round resident is pushed aside at a farmers' market. No one asks anyone else to a small dinner just for close friends, or wishes there were more time to spend reading quietly on the beach away from all the big parties. No one gives kudos. Or draws raves. No one embarks on an exciting new phase of his life, or comments that life is a journey. No one plans a benefit or dinner dance for a fatal disease. No one lowers his voice to say 'Jew.'

Harry recollects the incident that finally broke his marriage in two. The couple attended a grand dinner party, along with people with such De Vriesian (or Dickensian, or for that matter Joe Hellerian) names as Bobo

Stefan Kanfer is the author of Groucho *and* Ball of Fire. *His next book,* Stardust Lost, *a history of the Yiddish theater, will be published this year.*

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de Pleasure ("the conservative columnist with a liberal flair, whose own popular *Let's Get Ahead by Agreeing with All Sides* had just been reissued"); Parkyer Carsir ("the gossip publisher"); and Eely Moray, a television host about to forsake broadcasting in order "to found his own church based on the teachings of Joseph Campbell."

At the gathering, a chorus sounded from each of the tables. It consisted of the word *great*. "Everything spoken of was great. People who looked great were great and were doing great things. They were also about to embark on new projects which were themselves great." After a choir of greatness, the hostess asked her guests, one by one, to stand up and tell the others what great things he or she was up to. Ultimately Harry was called upon to inform the crowd of his latest undertaking: "I gulped down my fourth Margaux and decided that I would be more visible and more effective if I stood on the table. . . . 'This evening,' I said, 'this very evening. I am going home to give myself an enema. And it will be great.'" Not long afterward, the long-suffering Mrs. March headed for Splitsville. "Something about a last straw."

Lapham Rising contains a number of such confrontations, along with quotes from classic authors lamenting their own times—Hesiod is one of Rosenblatt's favorites ("Fairness and moderation are no longer esteemed"). But March overrides them all, and with good reason: Our own epoch *is* uniquely coarse and triumphantly vulgar, and never more visibly so than on the manicured playing fields of the Hamptons.

Manifestly, the author has been paying close attention not only to ancient Greek poets but also to modern filmmakers. The director/scenarist Billy Wilder once advised a colleague, "If you are going to tell people the truth, be funny or they will kill you." Rosenblatt has taken this sound advice to heart. He will not be shot on sight—not until the Island's A-list folks take a second look at *Lapham Rising*. Then he had better watch where he walks; the tears running down their cheeks will not be from merriment alone. ♦

Terrorism, 1950

When Puerto Rican nationalists tried to murder Harry Truman. BY TOM KELLY

According to the flyleaf, "Everything in this book is true according to transcript, interview, secondary source or official document. Interpretations, deductions and opinions, which should be clear from context, are our own."

Never mind the transcript, interview, secondary source or official document; let's get to the interpretations, deductions, and opinions. Stephen Hunter, a *Washington Post* movie critic, has written a book about the attempted assassination of Harry Truman, and shares the blame with John Bainbridge Jr., who is described as a Journalist Lawyer, coupling two professions despised by millions.

American Gun Fight
The Plot to Kill Harry Truman—and the Shoot-out That Stopped It
by Stephen Hunter and John Bainbridge Jr.
Simon & Schuster, 384 pp., $26.95

American Gun Fight purports to be the up-to-now suppressed account of what really happened on that November day in 1950 when two Puerto Rican heroes (according to the authors) made the fatal attempt to free their island home from the tentacles of the Octopus to the North.

The authors offer a list of the myths they believe the gullible public was tricked into believing by the FBI and the Secret Service: The assassination attempt was thrown together on the run; the assassins were upset by newspaper reports of what was going on in Puerto Rico, where an equally silly group of men were attempting a coup; they thought that Truman lived in the White House until a cab driver told them that he was temporarily living in Blair House across the street. Harry Truman was never in any mortal danger, and, due to the machinations of the government, the public regarded the attempt as a joke, a farce, an *opera bouffe*. Hunter and Bainbridge then try to blow it all down in one big breath. They say, of the items listed: "Every single one of them is wrong."

Actually, every single one of them is right. The assassins were Griselio Torresola, who was killed, and Oscar Collazo, who killed a policeman but survived. Meanwhile, their leader, Pedro Albizu Campos, was sitting out an uprising in Puerto Rico. There were five uprisers and all five were shot, four fatally. The authors seem persuaded that the attempt to kill Truman was perfectly understandable and, indeed, noble. They try hard to make Griselio and Oscar heroes, and El Pedro a superhero. (He had run for president of Puerto Rico and received 5,000 votes out of the hundreds of thousands cast.) They seem to believe that, with a little bit of luck, El Pedro would have been the Father of a Brave New Country.

The oddest thing about this odd book is the argument the authors are having with themselves. On Page 41 they mock the idea that the assassins were so out of touch with reality that they thought that Truman was in the White House until the cabby told them he was across the street. On Page 87 they report, matter-of-fact, that Grisella and Oscar *did* think Truman was in the White House and, when the cabby told them otherwise, they were so surprised that they felt "slapped in the face."

They assure us that Oscar, Griselio,

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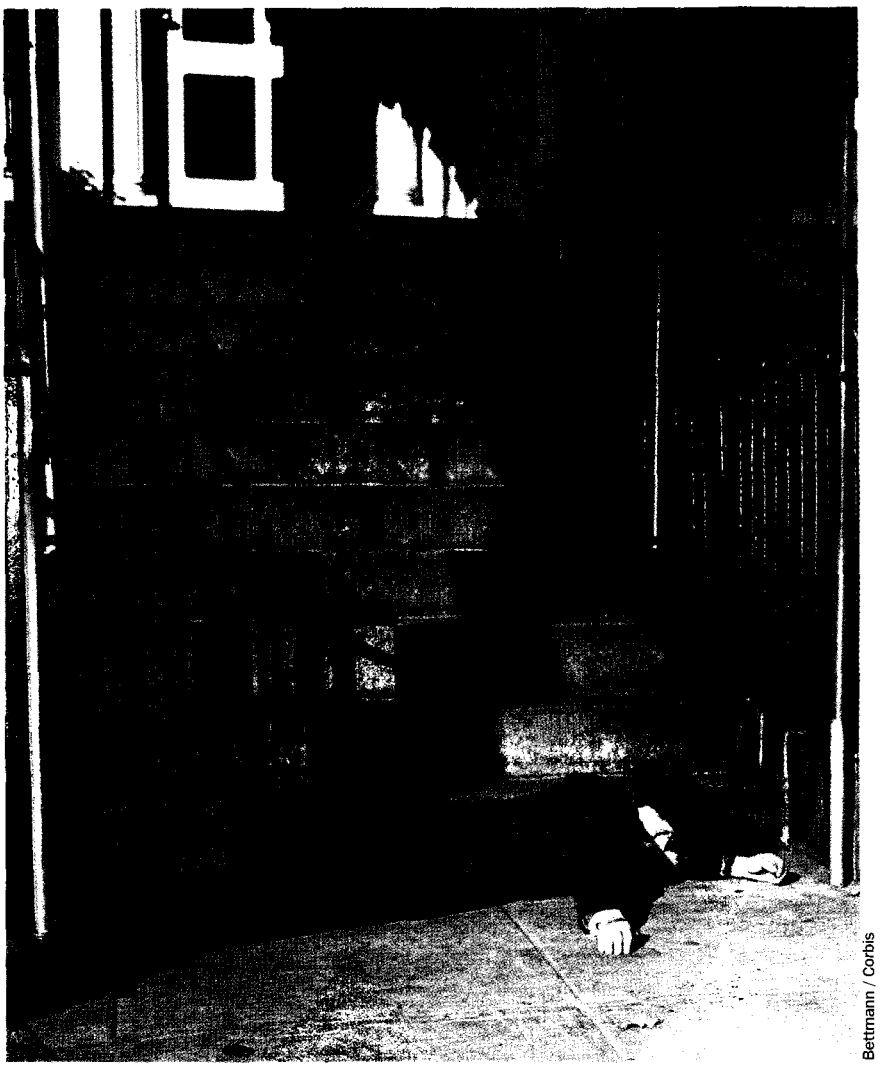
and El Pedro were able planners. Consider the planning. They had intended to gun down Harry Truman in the White House. How would they have gone about it? Would they have shot the guards in the guardhouse, run up the long curving path to the front door, shot the guards there, and then run around the huge building, shooting guards and innocent bystanders, until they found out where the president was?

Why shoot Truman, that gentle, dedicated man? Oscar, the one who survived, says it was nothing personal; the grim fact that Truman would have been dead was beside the point. These noble savages weren't after him, they were after "the president of the United States." What lover of crackpot nationalists could object to that?

Why did they want to kill the president? The authors aren't quite sure, but they offer us choices. Maybe it was the Spaniards, who "had left a legacy of violence" in Puerto Rico. Maybe it was the Americans, who arrived there after the Spanish in 1898, "advancing behind piety and bayonets," and who had changed "their language, their customs and even the spelling of the name of the island itself."

Or maybe it was simply the inspired idea of their leader, "fiery Pedro Albizu Campos." Fiery Pedro, a Harvard Law School graduate, was "a fighter against imperialism, a plotter of revolution, a man of almost saintly composure and assuredness [who] dazzled them all with his courage, his strength, his absolutism, his wit, his powerful oratory and his way of seeing through things to the absolute core." He was, they say, "smart. He was very smart." At Harvard he failed to maintain the C average required, but two professors recommended him for the law school anyway. One said Albizu was "a gentlemanly Puerto Rican, not brilliant intellectually but of good habits and appearance." The other said he was "unusually courteous and gentlemanly . . . and his work, if not brilliant, has been thorough and absolutely satisfactory."

El Pedro's courage wasn't always dazzling. In the brief, abortive revolt that preceded the assassination attempt in New York by a few days, he stayed home while five of his followers were being riddled with bullets. After a three-day siege, he and a young man named Rivera Walker surrendered. Walker went out, carrying a white napkin on a pole, while the Maximum Leader waited inside.



Bettmann / Corbis

The wounded Oscar Collazo in front of Blair House

This book is without substantial new facts, but loaded with suppositions, deductions, and opinions. The main players are long dead, but Hunter and Bainbridge seem able to move back in time and into the heads and hearts of the assassins, as well as bystanders, innocent or not, at home and abroad, and hear with their ears, see with their eyes, and read the thoughts that ran around in their brains.

Why did they write this loopy book? Perhaps, like many dedicated members of the modern media, they believe it is part of their job to present America as an exploiter of mankind and greedy gobbler of other peoples' goods. Why is the country that fought a civil war to abolish slavery, rescued Puerto Rico from "gold hungry" Spain, helped defeat Hitler, saved the Philippines from Spain, and brought Saddam Hussein, the butcher of hundreds of thousands of his countrymen, to judge and jury, the villain? Maybe Hunter has seen one Oliver Stone film too many. Perhaps Bainbridge feels, as lawyers often do, that the truth isn't important as long as you can persuade a jury. Why did Simon and Schuster publish this book? Maybe the publisher had a couple of idle presses, a lot of paper, and a desire to keep busy. ♦

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Soul Survivors

New faces and old voices, seen and heard.

BY DAVID SKINNER

Soul music, thank the Lord, is back. Well, sort of. A few rising stars, Joss Stone especially, have been wearing their soul on their sleeves, but even more interesting, several classic soul artists have recorded superb new albums. Solomon Burke and Al Green would be the headliners in this distinguished group, but one cannot overlook new and fine work from such heavenly talents as Bettye Lavette, the legendary Mavis Staples, and sometime chart-toppers Irma Thomas and Ann Peebles.

For those who find today's pop music vulgar, cynical, and even sometimes un-musical, there could hardly be better news. Several of the new recordings are worth recommending, while all of them are worth celebrating for the corrective lessons they offer to today's pop. Full of joy and hurt, but never therapeutic, today's soul music is no chicken soup for the soul. It's about the extremes of suffering and happiness, even as it takes its bearings from the humble dramas of everyday life and the high-stakes challenge of deserving God's love.

With her first album, *Soul Sessions* (2003), Joss Stone reminded many people of the popular potential of classic soul. A tall English girl of golden voice and blonde, feathery tresses, Stone was born in 1987 and is said to have been raised on a strict diet of Aretha Franklin and old R&B. After winning heavy play on alternative stations, *Soul Sessions* sold over two million copies, baffling connoisseurs with its evocative renditions of forgotten gems like "The Chokin' Kind" and "Dirty Man," big hits, respectively, for Joe Simon and Laura Lee in the '60s. This high-quality shtick—it seems, sadly, to have not been entirely sincere—made Stone famous. She recently replaced Sarah Jessica Parker as the celebrity salesgirl for GAP and has even made an appearance on Oprah.

Beware, however, of Stone's second album, *Mind, Body, and Soul*, on which, despite a couple of good tracks, this young lady acts more her age and offers a case study of what's wrong with today's pop music: pre-programmed jingles, instantly trite lyric-writing, a misplaced emphasis on the star instead of the music. Stone's voice is full of perfect round notes that could go on for days. It would thrill the judges on *American Idol* (in fact, she got her start by winning a radio talent contest). Unfortunately, this album also shows her to be almost as vainglorious as the set-chewing wannabes awaiting Paula Abdul's approval.

Solomon Burke's return to the music scene may have begun with Nick Hornby's hugely popular novel *High Fidelity* (1995). Rob, the record-store geek, freaks out when his girlfriend can't remember the name of that guy, you know, the one whose song he once played for her. "Solomon Burke!" he replies. "'Got to Get You Off My Mind.' That's our song! Solomon Burke is responsible for our entire relationship!"

For years, Burke lacked the name recognition of, say, Otis Redding or Isaac Hayes, but he once represented the gold standard for soul singers. Jerry Wexler, who, as vice president of Atlantic Records, cultivated most of the great Soul singers of the 1950s and '60s, once called Burke "the best soul singer of all time." When James Brown took to strutting with a crown and fur-lined cape, it was Burke's throne he believed he'd usurped.

But it was not Burke's friends from the '60s who brought him back. In fact, not a single one of the songwriters who midwifed *Don't Give Up On Me* possessed authentic soul credentials. They were Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello, Tom Waits, Van Morrison—in short, a bunch of guys more likely to form a Leonard Cohen Fan Club.

Yet the album proved a marvel of collaboration built on superb songwriting and uncommonly powerful singing. The CD successfully returned listeners to a music rooted in the Pentecostal and gospel traditions, where soul is no mere adjective but something to be lost or saved. Much the same can said of Burke's more recent album, *Make Do With What You Got.*

Rev. Al Green's more recent album (he's had two in the last few years), *Everything's Okay*, shows he retains the divine spark more than 20 years after leaving pop music to devote himself to God and gospel music. He sounds great, but the tone is different. There is altogether less longing in his music, less of that near-physical need for love that made him once the most romantic of soul singers. Instead he sounds exuberant, joyful—alas, contented.

The songwriting with his old Hi Records collaborator Willie Mitchell is very strong, especially on "Build Me Up," but the upbeat mood and lyrics begin to ring with too much cheer. The smiles turn indistinguishable as the shimmery sound of a half-dozen violins and an impossibly bright horn section provide fewer accent notes and ever more celebratory flourish. Also, the 60-year-old Green's voice has lost some of the oily muscle in its middle range that allowed him to float between ecstatic and awestruck. What remains great is the fullness and the verve of the sound.

It might be interesting to hear Al Green produced in the stripped-down manner that has been serving older singers from Neil Diamond to Solomon Burke to the late Johnny Cash so well in recent years, but going "indy" might also seem a bit phony in his case. Doing so would reverse the

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Joss Stone

UPI Newspictures / Roger Wollenberg

Solomon Burke

AdMedia / Jason Nelson

rightful flow of influence, well illustrated by the decision of Cat Power, a critically acclaimed alternative singer, to go to Memphis and hire several old Hi Records players to perform on her new album. The low-fi types have more to learn from Al Green than he from them.

Possibly the most intriguing example of today's soul is Bettye LaVette. Not a has-been, Lavette's a never-was. After a few hit singles in the '60s, she finished an album for Atlantic that failed to see the light of day until a few years ago when a French collector bought the masters and released it on his own. *Souvenirs* was hailed a masterpiece, especially in Europe where LaVette, like many soul greats, enjoys an avid following. This was followed up by two new albums, both well received, the Dennis Walker-produced and cowritten *A Woman Like Me* (2003) and last year's *I've Got My Own Hell to Raise*, produced by Joe Henry, a key figure in the return of soul music.

What Henry has produced for LaVette is a gorgeous, rough-edged recording of superb and superbly balanced musicianship in which a few instruments all play prominent roles to form the perfect setting for LaVette's beautiful, hair-raising rage. The quality of the instrumentation and its prominence on the recording are a testament to LaVette's voice, which does not need the set cleared for its star power to come across.

LaVette tells her own story in a version of Lucinda Williams's "Joy," which, if possible, she sings with even more ironic scorn than Williams. She changes the words to reflect where she searched for joy—Detroit, Muscle Shoals, New York—only to come away with an unjustly obscure recording career.

The most curious thing about LaVette's album is her choice of material, including a growling rendition of Aimee Mann's "How Am I Different." Where Mann sings with tightly wound archness and half-concealed contempt, LaVette takes you for a high-speed chase with stereo blasting, her big voice full of big demands and vindictive power. LaVette borrows the title of the album from the lyrics of her tenth track, a recording of Fiona Apple's "Sleep to Dream." But as with Mann's music, when LaVette sings Apple's sullen, grievance-nursing diatribe, no one's going to doubt that LaVette's "own hell to raise" really is LaVette's, and hers alone.

The contributions of rock 'n' roll artists of the boutiquey/singer-songwriter variety (Tom Waits, Joe Henry, Aimee Mann) to the return of soul music have been significant and surprising. If the kids on "American Idol" treat every note as an invitation to show their chops, then the delicate flowers of the arty, independent labels tend to the opposite. For them, songwriting is everything and sincerity is never a problem. Their main vice is a shrinkage of sound to the point of muttering. That these hoarse whisperers may have discovered an affinity for the beautifully calibrated beltings of soul is cause for celebration.

Another revelatory new soul album is gospel-flavored *I Believe to My Soul*, also produced by Joe Henry. It is the first in a series. Reviewed a little too casually in some quarters for its faint marketing resemblance to various revivalist-spirited compilations (*Buena Vista Social Club*, *O Brother Where Art Thou*), *I Believe to My Soul* is something else altogether, a group show in which five carefully selected, older soul artists all record new material.

The age of the artists does much to affect the album's sound. Take the wonderful Irma Thomas. Despite some heavy signature recordings like "Time Is On My Side" (a worthy alternative to the Rolling Stones's more famous version), Thomas's early '70s recordings seem a little too frisky by

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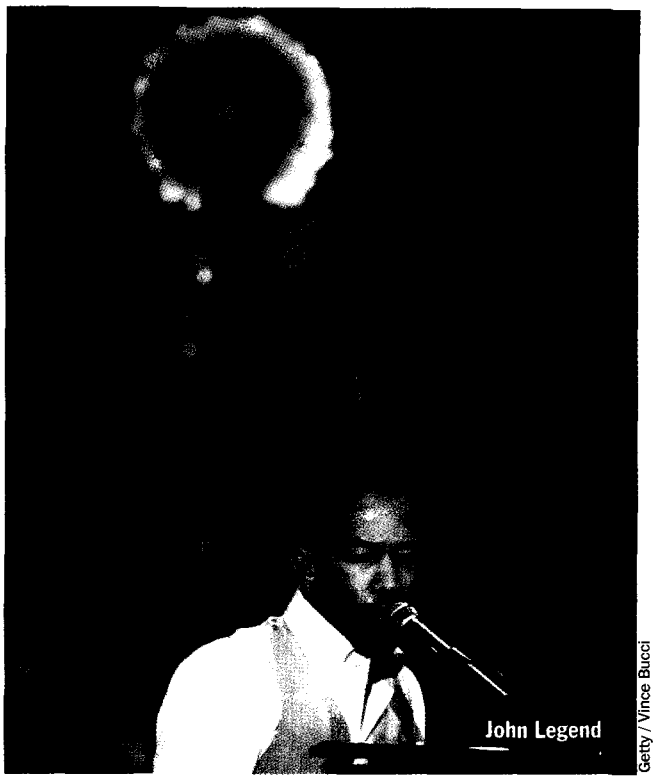
Mavis Staples

Gamma Presse / Youssef Boudlal


John Legend

Getty / Vince Bucci

today's standards. But on this compilation her soul shows dark and mysterious, while the years have left her still vibrant voice with just the right amount of sand and vinegar. Ann Peebles, perhaps best known for the balletically restrained "I Can't Stand the Rain," a big hit in 1973, also returns with more hiss in her voice, and she puts it to fine use on the bitterweet "Tonight I'll Be Staying Here With You." Peebles always represented the tempered side of soul singing, underselling itself just slightly to yank you in. The trick still works.

The star of *I Believe to My Soul*, to the extent that this compilation has one, is Mavis Staples, whose voice could hardly be more rich and supple. Staples calls on the sweetest of tones here but, like Peebles and Thomas, she works with the benefit of experience, as her bright notes seem deserved and the dark ones wise. Staples's rendition of Leadbelly's "You Must Have That True Religion" is, by itself, a great argument for all that today's pop has to learn from soul—musically, thematically, and spiritually.

Especially for fans who missed the heyday of soul (born too late, in my case), albums like *I Believe to My Soul* make you wonder what's on, say, Ann Peebles's *The Hi Record Years*—How could I have ever swayed to Paul Young's version of "I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down"?—or, to mention another featured artist, *The Best of Billy Preston.* And *Don't Give Up On Me* leads one to check out Rhino's revisionist collection of Solomon Burke hits. Then you start flipping through Peter Guralnick's *Sweet Soul Music*, and in the back of your mind, you're thinking about mentioning the *Best of Stax* collection to your wife, because it would make a really nice birthday gift.

Soul's influence can be seen among many younger artists, including two establishment figures whose latest albums were showered with Grammy nominations: "Unplugged" by Alicia Keys and "Get Lifted" by John Legend. Sadly, both are undermined by the auto-hagiographic tendency that, since the rise of rap, runs especially deep in black music and makes the performer's own stardom the running subtext to every computer-generated note and melody.

The title of Keys's new album would make one think it was recorded without digital enhancement; and yet the music still doesn't sound as if humans were involved. Nor does it sound as if songwriters were involved, even as credit is shared among whole committees of musicians, producers, fixers, and Keys herself, who went 0 for 5 on Grammy night, losing in the Best R&B Album category to none other than John Legend, who fared better, also winning Best New Artist and Best Male R&B vocal performance.

Legend, who appears to have bought his clothes at a Marvin Gaye outlet store, claims his stage name was a nickname given to him by his old-school musician friends. Possibly he owes more of his current good fortune to his creepy "presenter," Kanye West, with whom he's cowritten several flashy tracks, all of them of the you-so-fine-I'm-so-fine-you-know-you-want-to-get-with-me school.

Indeed, one trait of soul music that has never gone out of style is its preoccupation with the flesh. But the best track on Legend's album, *Ordinary People*, returns the singer to earth, accompanied by his own understated piano playing, in a tribute to the difficulties of love between mortals. A beautifully crafted song, it is also especially soulful.

In the songwriting credits, Legend is listed as plain old John Stephens. Who knows, if he plays his cards right, maybe this Stephens character will become more prominent on future John Legend recordings. In which case, this young artist might help ensure that the return of soul music is more than a limited reissue of the good old days. ♦

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Paradise Lost

Andy Garcia breaks with Hollywood to show where Cuba went wrong. BY JOHN PODHORETZ

"I had the greatest childhood I could ever want," the actor Andy Garcia said in 1999. "The only one I would change it for was to have grown up in Cuba. That would have been heaven on earth. But not Castro's Cuba. And hopefully it wouldn't have been Batista's Cuba, but a democratic Cuba. That would have been paradise, for me anyway."

The Lost City
Directed by Andy Garcia

Garcia has now co-authored and directed a movie called *The Lost City* that attempts to capture his Paradise Lost at the hinge moment in its history. *The Lost City*, which just opened in Miami and will appear in major American cities in April, begins in Havana in 1958, as the tight-knit Fellove family is torn apart by the collapsing regime of tinpot dictator Fulgencio Batista—and by the different ways in which the family's members hope to see Batista replaced.

The *paterfamilias*, a distinguished professor, seeks change through the country's own established institutions, especially the Cuban Senate. But his hopes are dashed when the dictator's goon squad assassinates the Senate's chief advocate for pluralistic democracy. One son, Luis, joins an underground group that also wants democracy but tries to achieve it with a failed effort to storm the dictator's mansion. The youngest, Ricardo, meets up with Che Guevara and joins Fidel Castro's insurgent army.

Garcia plays the oldest son, Fico, who doesn't have much to do with politics because he has other battles to fight. As the owner of the hottest club in Havana, he has to deal with American mobsters like Meyer Lansky (Dustin Hoffman) who want to use his place for their own illicit purposes. What Fico needs is freedom—the freedom to book the musical acts he admires and stage the dance numbers for which Havana was world-famous in those years.

The Fellove family's pursuit of freedom is costly—Luis is tortured and killed for his part in the failed democratic coup, while Ricardo's Communist fanaticism leads to the death of his uncle, a tobacco farmer whose land is expropriated by Castro's regime. Fico, the club owner, begins a torrid affair with Aurora, his brother Luis's widow. But she is seduced by illegitimate power when Castro decides to use her for propaganda purposes as the widow of a revolutionary martyr.

The Lost City's frank and unapologetic anticommunism shouldn't be startling, but it is, as there is only one other movie in English (Julian Schnabel's *Before Night Falls*) that paints a comparably harsh portrait of Castro and his revolution. Garcia still remembers his days as a native of Castro's Cuba. As he told *GQ* magazine in 1995, "I was coming home from day school singing 'The Internationale'—the Communist national anthem. I was being influenced by the indoctrination, going with the flow. Why not scream and yell with everybody else in school? What does a 5-year-old kid know about any of that? Then they passed the law about giving up the rights to your children to the state, and that's when my father said, 'That's enough.'"

His father Rene, who had been a prosperous lawyer and farmer, brought the family to Miami and worked ordering supplies for a catering company. He lived long enough to see his son Andres become a movie star, but he did not, alas, survive to see his son's attempt to educate the world about the ruined land from which his father was forced to exile himself and his family.

The screenplay for *The Lost City* is credited to the late Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and it was inspired to some degree by Cabrera Infante's own experimental account of prerevolutionary Havana, *Three Trapped Tigers*. But where Cabrera Infante's novel is wild and frenzied and very, very peculiar in the manner of 1960s Latin American fiction, *The Lost City* is stolid, stilted, and schematic. Garcia wants to show the world that there was a budding democratic opposition to Fulgencio Batista that was shoved aside and crushed by Castro's more relentless, Soviet-backed assault. But good moviemaking isn't about teaching lessons, it's about telling stories—and the story of the Fellove family is a hopeless nest of clichés.

Unfortunately for Garcia, his portrait of the fall of Havana must compete with every moviegoer's memory of the extraordinary scenes in Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather, Part II*—when Michael Corleone refuses to go in with his fellow gangster Hyman Roth (a barely fictionalized Meyer Lansky) on a multimillion-dollar investment in Cuba because he sees a revolution aborning. In every respect, from the depiction of Havana nightlife to the machinations of Lansky to Batista's panicked flight from power, *The Lost City* comes across as a fourth-generation color Xerox of Coppola's towering masterpiece.

Of course, Coppola had millions of dollars at his disposal to re-create 1958 Havana, while Garcia made his movie on the cheap in the Dominican Republic. Even more galling, Coppola was basically in sympathy with Castro, while Garcia tells the truth about one of the most evil men of the 20th century. Alas, good intentions and sensible politics aren't enough to justify a trip to the cinema. *The Lost City* is an admirable piece of work, but it's a dispiriting movie. ♦

John Podhoretz, a columnist for the New York Post, *is* THE WEEKLY STANDARD*'s movie critic.*

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[Hillary] Clinton returned $5,000 to the political action committee of Wal-Mart Stores Inc. . . . 'because of serious differences with current company practices.' The senator served on the Wal-Mart board from 1986 to 1992. —Associated Press, February 3, 2003

Parody

Clinton Quiet About Past Wal-Mart Ties —Associated Press Headline, March 10, 2006

Tomorrow: *The same. High 4, Low 1.*

Details, Page **B8**

128TH UNDERPERFORMING YEAR, NO. 177 DC MD VA

Clinton Denies Ever Having Not Disliked Wal-Mart

By NOMANI SONILAND
Washington Post Staff Writer

Senator Hillary Clinton has angrily denied reports linking her to positive statements about Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. "These allegations are outrageous and totally false," Clinton said. "My campaign remains completely committed to a thorough dislike and, if necessary, outright hatred of Wal-Mart Stores."

Clinton, who served on Wal-Mart's board from 1986 to 1992, has been accused of harboring positive feelings about the company and of having called her time with Wal-Mart "a great experience." But a spokesperson for the Clinton campaign asserts that the senator was misquoted and meant "a grating experience."

The allegation of friendly feelings toward Wal-Mart comes at a time of setbacks for the senator, who recently stirred controversy over her claim that she was not familiar with—much less married to—former president Bill Clinton. Experts have said that such claims seem unlikely to bear close legal scrutiny, although Bill Clinton has affirmed them. "As long as I have the privilege of serving the American people," Hillary Clinton told reporters, "I pledge to insulate myself politically from such damaging associations."

Clinton's accusers say that her association with Wal-Mart was initiated by the infamous Sam "Sammy the Smiley" Walton and that informal contact continued for several years. As recently as last month, journalists spotted Clinton in New York City coming out of a restaurant with Wal-Mart associates. Clinton disputes the report and lashed out at what she has called ethnic stereotypes. "To paint all Arkansans with the Wal-Mart brush is profoundly offensive to the millions of law-abiding residents of that great state," Clinton said.

See **SLUR**, *A5, Col.1*

Jessica Simpson 'Loves Bush'

the weekly Standard

MARCH 27, 2006

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In the new issue of *Policy Review*

Of Power and Providence

The old United States and the new European Union

The European reaction to the unbridled use of U.S. power in George W. Bush's first term was one of both defiance and cooperation, and it will probably retain a mixed character. It would be churlish for Europe to refuse cooperation in matters where Europe also has an important stake, such as common action against terrorism, but this eminently reasonable attitude limits any attempt to impose linkage.... Alongside this, however, the European refusal to do the dishes after the Americans made their unilateral meal in Iraq was a form of defiance and one that had a significant impact.... Even when European governments have wanted good relations with America, the sheer unpopularity and felt illegitimacy of the American effort constrained their ability to offer troops. European publics do not warm to the idea of taxation without representation, and their attitude has been registered in the conduct of their governments. Here, at least, Europe's democratic deficit is not so large after all.

—David C. Hendrickson

Literature in Theory

Bad theory, that is

To reconcile Theory's affirmation of the radical indeterminacy of texts with its claim that such indeterminacy generates an emancipatory and typically egalitarian political program, one would have to suspend the ordinary laws of reason—recognized, contrary to Theory's extreme pronouncements, not only in the West but around the globe and from time immemorial. If texts are all there is and the world is nothing but a text, if moral and political standards like everything else are constructed and not discovered, why shouldn't the strong and ruthless regard themselves as emancipated to rewrite other people's lives in whatever ways strike their fancy and they can get away with?

—Peter Berkowitz

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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